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SOCCER

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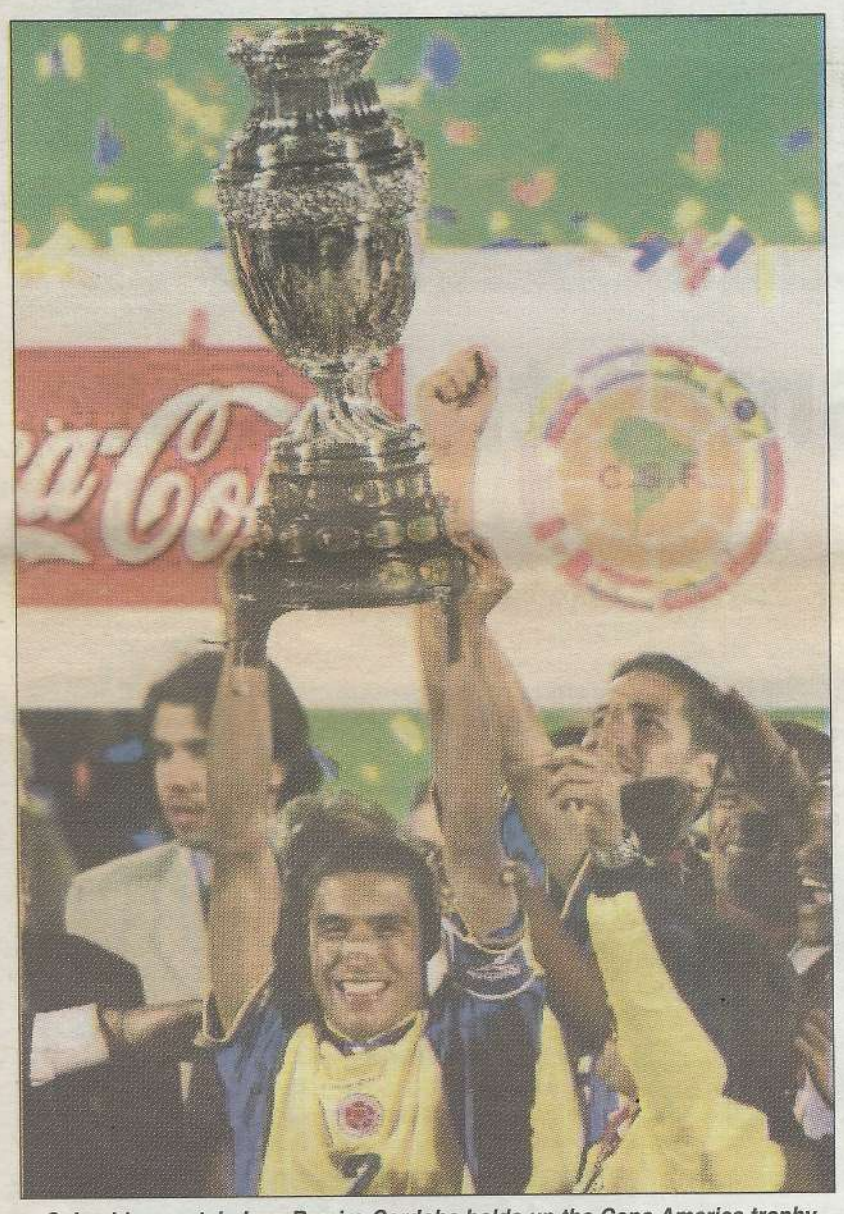
Farina Opts For Young Guns



Colombian captain Ivan Ramiro Cordoba holds up the Copa America trophy after his team beat Mexico in the final in Bogota, Colombia. Colombia won the match 1-0 to take the title for the first time.

By John Economos

FRANK FARINA, Australia's World Cup manager will tonight possibly release the names of 25 players that will make up the provisional squad. This squad will be trimmed back to the actual travelling squad of 18 which will fly out on Saturday week, (August 11th), to play the national team of Japan in Shizuoka on August 15th.

It's fully anticipated that Farina will by-pass drafting into his initial squad any Australian players engaged with the England Premier League.

When ABSW contacted Farina last night, he stated:

"I met up with the head of the Asian Football Confederation, Peter Velappan, and I told him that for this year only, Australia just couldn't fit in a second, (home), game against Japan.

"This time round it will be a one-off match, but in future years these games should be played on a home and away basis."

After playing Japan on the 15th, three days later Australia has been scheduled to play the Solomon Islands in a friendly in Honiara.

Farina made it clear to ABSW last night that he will be picking a different squad-mix for the Solomon Islands.

Farina will not be afraid to blend in a sprinkling of Young Guns such as Wayne Shroj, Mark Byrnes, Jade North and even Brett Holman.

Brett Holman

Wayne Shroj

"Some were highly impressive with our Under 17s and should be given a go. But these young ones I will not be taking to Japan at this stage, but they will definitely be in contention for the squad that will be going to the Solomon Islands.

"We also plan to have a friendly against Latvia sometime in September. I will be calling into the squad some of the Euro-based players, as many as maybe ten. That's if they can be available.

"Players such as Tony Popovic, (if he still hasn't signed with Crystal Palace), Luke Casserly, Steve Laybutt and John Aloisi have all assured me that they are available to come over for the match against Japan," ended Farina.

Frank Farina: Australia's World Cup Manager.

SOUTH UNVEIL KRNCEVIC AS NEW COACH

By Bert van Bedaf

South Melbourne is set to announce Eddie Krncevic as its coach for next season.

The national league club is holding a press conference at Bob Jane Stadium at 10am today and is expected to reveal the former Marconi coach as the successor to the departed Mike Petersen, who joined the Kingz in Auckland, New Zealand.

"Eddie (Krncevic) has got the job," a club insider told ABSW yesterday.

Krncevic parted company with Marconi after the Stallions were knocked out of the finals in the second round this season.

A former overseas star, with successful stints at Belgian clubs such as top side Anderlecht, and a former Socceroo, Krncevic returned to Australia to play a season at Eastern Pride under Frank Arok before taking up as inaugural coach at now defunct club Carlton in 1997.

He took Carlton to the grand final in the 1997-98 season and lost to South Melbourne then coached by Ange Postecoglou.

He stayed at Carlton for another season before being replaced by Stuart Monro, who coached Carlton until the club collapsed last December.

Krncevic may find the going tough at Melbourne's premier club. He will need to produce equivalent success at South, which has lost several key players, while others have retired.

He also will need to create close rapport with captain Paul Trimboli, who is said to have been less than happy with the appointment.

South GM, Damien Phillips declined to confirm the appointment last Monday, saying the South board wanted to leave the announcement until today.

ATTENTION READERS!

Due to rising production costs, we hereby regret to announce that ABSW will from Tuesday, August 7, 2001 cost a bit more.

ABSW will now be sold for $3.60. We sincerely regret this like but promise to give our dear readers more value for their money with better stories, interesting features and a comprehensive soccer news service.

Thanks.

AUSTRALIA'S YOUNGEST MAN. UNITED SUPPORTER

Master Jack Gerbec, firmly believes that his beloved star-studded team, Manchester United, again will dominate and steam ahead to ultimately win the England League Championship which kicks off next month.

Little Jack who on the 15th of this month celebrated his second birthday, resides in Sydney's inner western suburb of Croydon.

Living with his Dad Joey, Mum Kristen and two older sisters and a brother, young Jack is understood to be United's youngest ever supporter in Australia.

When *ABSW* approached this potential little footballing warrior to ask who was his favourite Manchester United player, unhesitatingly the cute and astute little Jack, quipped back: "Unquestionably, England's flamboyant captain, Mr David Beckham."

And does Jack really love Manchester United?

"Increasingly so," he hit back.

But with a slight tone of caution, Jack sceptically went on to heed:

"Don't be surprised if Liverpool this season makes life a little tougher for Manchester United's Championship retention aspirations.

"Gerry's (Houllier), done a great job over there for those Merseysiders."

Whilst Jack, (who himself possesses a strong resemblance to a David Beckham without a shaven haircut), and despite his powerful passionate affiliation with Manchester United, he voluntarily also confessed to us:

"I must admit that as well, I do have some powerful, passionate pursuit for my Dad's beloved South Sydney who at long last has been justifiably reinstated back into the N.R.L.

"But Manchester United is by far my greatest love, " Jack Gerbec firmly assured *ABSW.*

Today Master Jack Gerbec proudly presents to our readers the new full Season Fixture list of the England Premier League.

Master Jack Gerbec: Australia's youngest supporter of Manchester United.

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Rookie coach, Alzamendi steps-in at Canberra Cosmos

By Graham Cooke

Canberra Cosmos took the plunge last week and appointed former Uruguayan international Antonio Alzamendi as their coach for the 2001-02 National League season.

In doing so they have made a huge gamble in appointing an outsider with little or no knowledge of Australian soccer with just nine weeks to go before the season kicks off.

There is no doubting Alzemendi's pedigree: he played for River Plate of Argentina and Uruguay's Penarol, both legends of world club football. In addition he has represented his country more than 100 times.

As a coach he has experience at club level and with the national B team and has worked alongside the national team boss, former Argentine star Mario Kempes.

The major disadvantage will be a total unfamiliarity with the Australian soccer set up, and of the players he must assemble in short order to field a competitive squad.

Even assuming no more of the Cosmos' current squad jump ship, he will need to find at least one quality midfielder, a central defender, a striker and probably a couple of squad players from outside the region. That task will not be easy.

Cosmos director Phil Rutherford was optimistic, saying Alzamendi will bring a level of professionalism and soccer expertise to Canberra "that we have not had the pleasure of experiencing before".

"I think it's going to be a very exciting season", he said. "Our supporters remember our success from last season and they are not going to be happy with anything less this time round.

"We're doing things a little differently and we'll deliver our best season yet".

Dangerous words. The last time they were heard in Canberra was during the Rale Rasic era, and the club went on to finish bottom.

(L-R) Gabriel Wilks (Manager), Carlos Turini (Solicitor), with new coach Antonio Alzamendi.

"I'll make Cosmos the best"

Antonio Alzamendi, 42, played 100 full internationals and 50 friendlies for Uruguay and he also played for four of South America's biggest clubs, Penarol and Nacional of Uruguay and Independiente and River Plate of Argentina.

"To coach a National League club in this country is a dream come through.

Today, Australian Soccer is well-respected, not only in my country but all over the world.

I had the chance to see the game between the Socceroos and France for the Confederations Cup and I was very impressed with the wealth of talent at Frank Farina's disposal," stated Alzamendi in a chat with ABSW.

"I am looking forward to start working with this progressive club, and I hope my team will be able to play an attractive and positive style of football. My aim is to place Canberra Cosmos among the best clubs in this country," said Alzamendi.

The Uruguayan coach will assess the current Cosmos squad before making a decision about the need to build a competitive side for the 2001/2002 National League season.

- Antonio Alzamendi

PLAYING CAREER

- 1978-79, Argentine champion with Independiente
- 1979-80, top goalscorer with Independiente in the Argentine league.
- 1982, Uruguayan champion with Nacional.
- 1986, Uruguayan champion with Penarol.
- 1986, 1990, represented Uruguay in World Cups finals
- 1986, top goalscorer with Penarol in the Uruguayan league.
- 1986, Copa de Oro champion with Uruguay.
- 1986, named "Best Player" of the Toyota Cup final.
- 1987, Argentine champion with River Plate.
- 1989, Copa America runner-up with Uruguay.

COACHING CAREER

- In 1992 and 1993, at his place of birth, Alzamendi won Durazno's First Division State League championships with Wanderers and Central respectively
- 1992 - Was in-charge of the Uruguayan Division B national team winners of the 1999 Nerhu Cup in India.
- Coached Uruguayan first division clubs Central EspaÒol (1997) and Rampla Juniors (1999),
- Coached Spanish Club Deportivo Logrones (1996) and Peruvian first division club Cienciano (1998-1999).

Popovich off to Crystal Palace

Australian international defender, Tony Popovic flew out last weekend to join Crystal Palace.

The former player of Japanese League club,Sanfrecce Hiroshima apparently got the nod of Palace after failed attempts to get a contract offer from another English first division side, Preston North End.

Popovic, 28, has been keen on a move out of the J-League for long in order to enhance his international reputation and break into the European leagues.

If all goes well at Crystal Palace, Popovic will be expected to undergo trials with a view to impressing Palace coach, Ray Wilkins.

Before he left, he assisted in an 11th hour attempt to get Hiroshi Miyazawa to sign for Sydney United.

With the move proving unworkable however, Miyazawa leaves for New Zealand this weekend after a send-off from some of his former Cosmos teammates.

Sydney United have meanwhile, begun training and new Braveheart signings Jon Angelucci and Daniel Watkins have been joined by Paul Wearne and John Kelso who have been invited to United for trials.

Tony Popovich (left) seen here with Australian team - mate John Aloisi, is off to Crystal Palace.

Elsewhere, ex-Eastern Pride supremo Jeff Hopkins was shortlisted but unfortunately missed out on the Canberra Cosmos coaching job, which went to former Uruguayan international Antonio Alzamendi. Jeff is however still being considered for another role at the Cosmos and may end up as Assistant to the Uruguayan ex-international.

Mark Hagger is continuing to talk to Parramatta Power and Kiwi Greg Uhlmann has apparently caught the eye of South Melbourne.Fellow Kiwi, Brad Scott has been invited back to talk with rejuvenated Canberra Cosmos.

Pat Carrera (18 this week) and Matthew Biggins are due to sign new agreements with Parramatta Power while Andrew Crews should be announcing next week where he'll be keeping goalsnext season.

Allegations trail South elections

The New South group that lost the election to president George Vasilopoulos and his Protect South ticket last week, is ready to challenge the result.

New South lost 13-2 to Protect South, but it alleges possible irregularities during the voting procedure could make the result invalid.

"We believe some people voted more than once," New South spokesperson Phil Diamataris said.

"We asked for the electoral list to be checked but we were denied access. We have sought legal advice on what action to take," he said.

Solicitor Nick Zervos, who was elected on the board under the New South ticket, together with Panos Margaritis, confirmed there "was concern with the voting pattern".

"We asked the (electoral) committee to double check. It said that was not possible. This is now being looked into," Zervos said.

We Deserve Automatic W-Cup Slot: Farina

By Richard Kreider

Socceroos boss Frank Farina feels the time is right for the soccer nations of Oceania to be given the right to earn automatic selection for the World Cup finals, instead of the ruthless two-game elimination process.

Speaking at a press conference in Perth, prior to officially opening a new stand for local State League club Inglewood United, Farina believes the time is right for a fairer qualifying corridor.

"It comes down to 180 minutes of football every four years," said Farina, who took over the reigns of the national side in September 1999.

After a bronze medal placing at the Confederations Cup, which included victories over the world first and second ranked countries, plus a current world ranking of 45, Farina feels the worlds governing body FIFA, should now be treating Oceania the same way as the other confederations. "They continually change the level of the bar," said Farina.

"Without being a politician, we are the only confederation in world football which doesn"t have automatic qualification to the World Cup. We've got half a spot, if you like."

"No longer can the Europeans, the South Americans or the Asians say Australia aren't good enough to warrant given them a spot."

"What we"ve recently shown as a team justifies that and if you (FIFA) are not going to give us a spot, put us in a qualifying group such as Asia: even Europe, who cares," he said.

"Let us be like the Brazil's of the world, where they are going through a difficult period having lost three games but can still go through," he said.

"And if they don't automatically go through, they then get a chance to qualify through the back door against us."

Farina believes the code will take-off dramatically in this country when it is eventually assured of a 2002 World Cup Finals berth.

"We always talk about soccer being a sleeping giant; well the game not only at the national level, or the national league level, but also the grassroots level will rise to a point we have never seen before."

"That is why it has always been our holy grail. Twenty-eight years without getting there is the reason why it is becoming more and more important for the (Australian) game."

The ex-Socceroo striker said if he had a choice of opposition for whoever the fifth-placed South American nation will be, he would rather face Uruguay.

"Colombia is a nightmare to get to and then there's the altitude. Uruguay on the other hand is easy to get to as is Brazil where we play at sea level," he said.

"We will have a clearer picture as to who that might be in about three rounds time. In 1994, people were saying there is no way we will be playing Argentina. So, I will please ask everyone to stop saying that there is no way we will be playing Brazil."

The Socceroos next matches are against Japan on August 15, a guest appearance in the Solomon Islands three days later, followed by an overdue friendly versus Latvia that has been pencilled in for early September.

"Then in November we will have probably the best preparation we could possibly have leading into the two World Cup qualifiers where we play France.

And as you know, we beat them in the Confederation's Cup 1-0 and this time around they will be sending a very strong squad to make sure that doesn't happen again," Farina said.

"They had already sent a delegation party to check out the ground and facilities, so they are taking this game very seriously."

"They (France) have only lost four times since the World Cup Final in 1998 and are not going to come out to Australia to be beaten a second time by us."

"I think there will be a bit of niggle, a bit of nasty in the game, but it will put us in good stead for what will the two biggest games in what I believe, in Soccer Australia's history."

"Hopefully, all our dreams will come to fruition in November," he said.

Farina assured the large press contingent, that the French clash will contain his strongest possible squad which could very well include Chelsea and former Manchester United goalkeeper Mark Bosnich.

"'Bozza' has told me he wants his spot, as does Mark Schwarzer too. With Kalac, Juric, Bolton and Petkovic, I believe we've currently got the best talent of goalkeepers than any country in the world."

"But at this stage, Mark Schwarzer will wear the number one shirt; he's earned it having played four years competitive football and has not put a foot wrong."

"'Bozza' had his problems at Manchester United, but he's up there as well."

Should Australia qualify for the 2002 Finals, Farina hinted at a four-nations tournament involving three other qualified nations, and said he would like to see one of the games held in Perth.

"The crowds are great here and I'm certain there would be no problem filling Subiaco Oval for a game like that, with our strongest line-up."

Meanwhile, Farina congratulated the local code for constructing a new ground for state league soccer. "It is amazing a local State League would pour so much money into building such a stand. At the same time, I think it's a sign of the times that with the success of Perth Glory, where they've have gone in the past five years, that it's also being mirrored in the local leagues," he said.

"For them to build such a complex, it's a pleasure for me to come over and see how State League soccer is going in Perth," Farina concluded.

Players of the Australian National side celebrating one of their goals during the 2002 World Cup Qualifing Game against New Zealand.

HAJDUK WANDERERS SOCCER CLUB INC

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Applications are invited for the 2002 Season for the following coaching positions.
All applicants must hold a minimum intermediate licence.

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VSF HOST KOORI KIDS

A sports afternoon was conducted yesterday, Monday July 30th from 12.30-3.30pm in Coburg, for over 100 Koori Primary School children.

The Sports Day involved six sports and gathered leading players and coaches to provide an opportunity for the children to experience a range of sporting activities.

The sports involved were Soccer, Cricket, Australian Rules Football, Basketball, Athletics and Tennis. Tabloid Sports Carnivals also provided a tabloid sports activity.

The afternoon of activities was organised by Geoff Miles, Chief Executive of the Victorian Soccer Federation, to harness the commitment of a group of sports working together, to provide a unique benefit for the Koori community.

A large majority of the children experienced sports that they have not tried before and they will received a participation certificate and giveaways from the participating sports.

Some of the Sporting stars that were be involved in the Sports Day are:

Athletics - Olympians, Sarah Jamieson and Peter Winter

Cricket - Victorian Bushrangers player, Michael Klinger

Basketball - Bulleen Boomers player, Larissa Cavanagh

Soccer - National League players - Patrick Kisnorbo (South Melbourne) and Daniel Vasilevski (Melbourne Knights)

Football - AFL Players

The sports day was developed with the full support of Sport and Recreation Victoria, the Victorian Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation Co-op, Athletics Victoria, Victorian Little Athletics, Football Victoria, Basketball Victoria, Tennis Victoria, Victorian Cricket Association, Victorian Soccer Federation and Tabloid Sports Carnivals.

Mt Pritchard & District Federation
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3. Under 18 Division 1 State League
4. Director of Coaching Youth & Cadet League
5. Under 16 Division 1 Youth League
6. Under 15 Division 1 Youth League
7. Under 14 Division 1 Youth League
8. Under 13 Division 1 Youth League
9. Under 12 Division 1 Cadet League
10. Under 11 Division 1 Cadet League

Applications for the above positions close on 10th August 2001. All applicants must hold a minimum Intermediate Licence and appropriate Coaching Council Accreditation for all Coaching positions.
Enquiries to the Secretary, Sue Hartas 9673 4939 or 0414 701 489
All Applicants must supply details of experience, qualifications and Personal References to:

THE SECRETARY
MT. PRITCHARD FEDERATION SOCCER CLUB
7 MARANIE AVE, ST MARYS NSW 2760

The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

DAVID ACESKI, Marconi's goalkeeper, is currently in Europe on trials with top Yugoslav Club, O.F.K. Beograd.

The O.F.K. club seems very interested in signing the 23 year old Aussie on a 12 month contract deal.

Meanwhile ten of the Marconi players have already started pre-season training.

In other news concerning Marconi, consultant Lee Sterrey has signed up former Sydney United left sided player, Shane Webb.

Sterrey stated to 'Good Oil' last night: "Since Simon Bell left to join the Northern Spirit, we had only one left sided player in Brendan Renaud."

Meanwhile Sterrey is amused by the fact that many young players he has approached, all have 'Player's Agents' looking after them.

"It's becoming a real joke as they are all talking telephone numbers re-contracts," stated Sterrey.

David Aceski: Marconi's custodian on trials in Yugoslavia.

❑❑❑❑

LAST edition we broke that the most adventurous BANKSTOWN CITY CUBS' Under 14s, currently competing in the Super Youth League of NSW, is preparing to embark on a most enterprising crusade in September to Europe.

The Bankstown City Cubs have already scheduled a series of games to be played against teams in Austria, Belgium, Germany plus in Holland.

What a marvellous and ambitious project by this Club.

The squad of 16 players plus 10 parents and officials, fly out of Sydney on September 28th for just over two weeks.

Six matches have been confirmed and the travelling squad will visit some of the best stadiums in Europe.

The Bankstown City Cubs team is coached by the enthusiastic and dedicated Saso Boskovski.

For months this little team has been most actively on a full speed course in a fund-raising drives.

As well, the Bankstown City Cubs have planned an 'Auction Dinner Dance' on August 4th at the Monterey Function Centre in Bankstown.

Tickets on sale cost $50 each, (inclusive of a three course dinner, soft drinks, wines, beer), and may be purchased by phoning 02-9796 1962.

❑❑❑❑

EDDIE KRNCEVIC, coach of Marconi for the past two seasons, has of late been rumoured to be 'The Man' to take over the reins of departed South Melbourne's Minor League Champion winning coach, Mickey Petersen.

Now that South's Board elections were completed last Sunday week, the announcement of their new NSL coach is immanent.

Should Krncevic be installed as South's new coach, he will be reunited with Jeff Olver who was also his assistant when the two of them were in charge of the now defunct Carlton three years ago.

South now face the arduous task of squad-rebuilding, having lost since last season's Grand Final, no less than six key players in off-season transfers.

An announcement on the coaching position is expected sometime later this week.

Eddie Krncevic: Next coach at South Melbourne?

❑❑❑❑

NIGERIA early yesterday morning, (Monday), became the fifth African nation to qualify for the 2002 Japan/Korea World Cup Finals.

In its last match played yesterday, Nigeria defeated Ghana 3-0, played at Port Harcourt, in Nigeria.

The Nigerians now join the other four African World Cup finalists, the Cameroons, Senegal, South Africa and Tunisia.

Kanu: Nigeria's ace striker.

❑❑❑❑

The situation of 'Player's Agents' has become in Australia, farcical to say the least.

It seems that today, every player has an 'agent' or a 'manager' to handle their affairs.

And here we are not referring to just top class international players, but average, and in many cases, very ordinary players.

Matching these so called 'ordinary' players, is a stack of very 'ordinary' unlicensed agents.

The situation has rapidly become out of hand.

FIFA seems to understand all this and as from March 1st, FIFA will not be issuing anymore Agency licenses.

As from 1st September, the term 'FIFA Player's Agent' will not exist anymore.

Previously, to be a FIFA licensed Player's Agent, one would have to pass interviews, hand in first class character references as well as lodging a bond of 200,000 Swiss francs in Zurich.

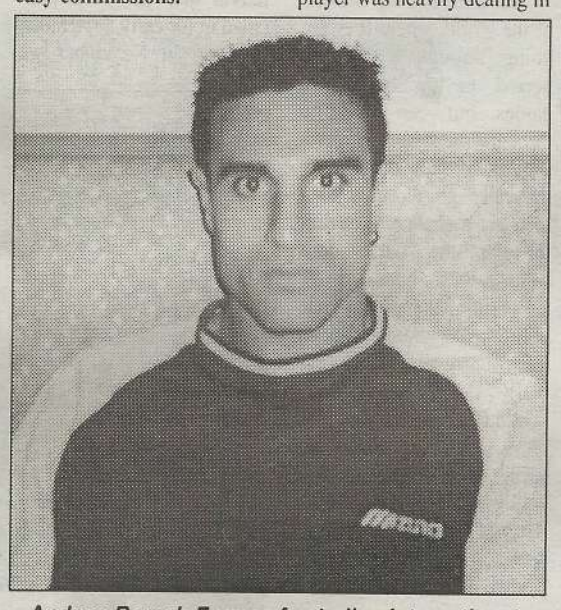
Now these bonds are no longer required by FIFA but a heavy insurance indemnity cover must be taken out by existing Agents.

Until recently, Australia had only four fully licensed FIFA Agents living and operating in this country.

Yet there are heaps more of these so-called 'agents' swarming all over the country making out they are professionals with powerful contacts overseas.

Sheer rubbish.

Most of them get players to sign up and sit back hoping to fluke an overseas inquiry or sale to collect easy commissions.



Andrew Bernal: Former Australian international, now an Agent.

Recently another three people acquired their full FIFA badged licenses to be recognised as official agents operating within Australia.

One such officially installed Player's Agent is non other than former Australian international defender, Andrew Bernal.

Bernal is tied up with a huge England based agency syndicate, (SFX), that handle big time stars such as Robbie Keane and David Beckham.

❑❑❑❑

WITH the name Pele, is there anyone on the planet that doesn't know who he is, or even hasn't heard of that name before?

Impossible. No?

Well strange as it may appear, that seemed to be the case earlier this month in England, and in a court of Law at that, would you believe?

During a trial inside the World famous Court of 'Old Bailey', a jury panel was seriously listening to the Prosecutor's cross-examination of a former Turkish Soccer player, who in his retirement from the playing pitch suddenly became a 'Chemist' to generate some easy money.

Whilst the former Soccer player was heavily dealing in the smuggling of drugs, the Law caught up with him.

The former Galatasary player, (48 year old Gungor Tekin), was automatically arrested and charged with illegal drug trafficking.

In his cross-examination, the Prosecutor asked Tekin:

"Did you ever play with Pele?".

That's when all hell broke loose inside the Court.

Before Tekin could answer, the 68 year old residing Judge, Hubert Dunn, leaned forward over his bench and innocently asked the most embarrassing question of all:

"Who is Pele?"

That's when the entire jammed packed Court exploded into loud hysterical laughter.

The by-now scarlet red Judge Dunn, was explained that Pele was the Brazilian living legend Soccer player whose World Cup career kicked off with the 1958 World Cup Finals in Sweden when Pele was just 17 years of age.

Pele's super international career stretched through for Brazil up till 1970 with another World Cup victory for that South American nation.

The final verdicts?

Drug smuggler—guilty and sentenced.

Judge Dunn—also guilty, on a plea of unforgivable ignorance at having not heard of Pele.

PELE: In Australia last June and reading ABSW.

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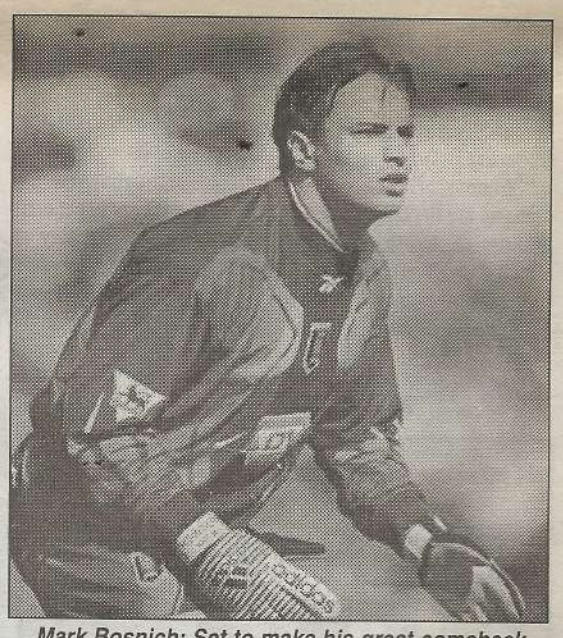
MARK BOSNICH, that almost forgotten great goalie, seems at last to be ready and more than able to make his long awaited comeback in the England Premier League with Chelsea.



Mark Bosnich: Set to make his great comeback into action.

Chelsea's first League match is on August 19th against Newcastle United, and 'Bozza' has already shown some excellent form in pre-season games.

The flamboyant Aussie 'keeper, stated last week to the English press: "I'm in fine shape and am fitter and faster than I have been for years.

"I'm happy with the way things have progressed since my operation and cannot wait to get into action in the new season," Bosnich stressed.

The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

The 29 year old stylish custodian has also made it clear that he is ready and on standby for Frank Farina to call him back into action for Australia come November against France and our South American World Cup opponent.

Bosnich underwent an operation on his trouble knee during the off-season and according to him, has made a complete and satisfactory recovery.

Last week 'Bozza' guarded Chelsea's upright in a friendly against Leyton Orient.

It was Bosnich's first game for Chelsea since he joined them from Manchester United last January and his first game in almost 15 months.

Despite playing only 46 minutes in this match, Bosnich exhibited magnificent form that more than pleased Italian manager, Claudio Ranieri.

A fully match fit Bosnich together with the ever-reliable and rock-hard Mark Schwarzer, would hugely increase Australia's stocks come November.

Remember Bosnich's heroic deeds for Australia against Brazil in the Confederations Cup in 1997?

And that's when Brazil's twin-guns Romario and Ronaldo were in full fury.

❑❑❑❑

THE MARCONI JUNIORS and Youth Presentation Night is to be staged on Saturday August 11th at 6 pm.

Ms Lisa Severin, Marconi's Co-ordinator of the Junior set up has just a few tickets left for this glamour evening:

Marconi has squads in the Juniors Under 7s through to the Under 17s.

Some 700 people are expected to attend the Presentation Night.

❑❑❑❑

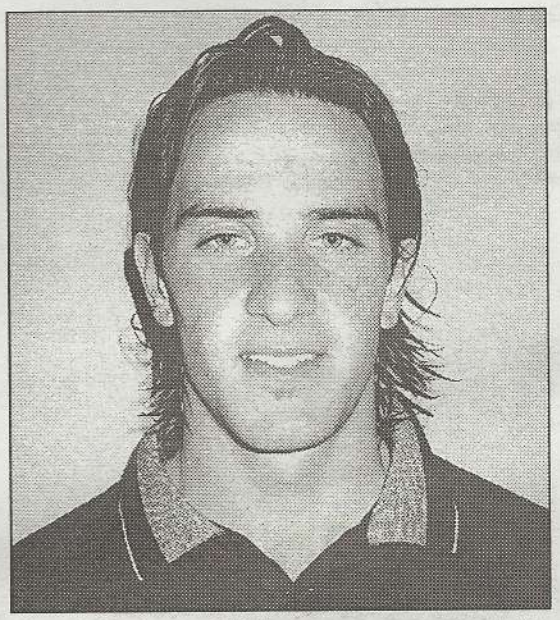
ANGELO COSTANZO's off-season potential move to Perugia has now collapsed.

It appears that the Perugia coach was most happy with Costanzo's form when the Australian attacking defender was there on trials four weeks ago.

But before the coach could sign Angelo, the Club's Directors stipulated that the coach had to sell three or four players from Perugia's overcrowded squad.

Costanzo, whose wife Helen is expecting their first child within ten weeks, has been selected in Frank Farina's Australian squad that will tour Japan and the Solomon Islands in August.

Sydney Olympic was hopeful of signing Costanzo, but he still has another year to serve under his contract with Marconi.


Angelo Costanzo: Still has a one year contract with Marconi.

❑❑❑❑

DAVID LOWE, last season's assistant coach at Newcastle United, is about to return to the Club that he played most of his NSL career with.

David Lowe: About to return to Marconi as coach.

It's understood that the former brilliant international striker, 'Lowie', will be Marconi's new assistant coach to Lee Sterrey.

'Lowie', a lad that was born and bred in Newcastle, was Lee Sterrey's assistant last season when Sterrey was in charge of Newcastle United.

Now it seems that 'Lowie' is making a 'boomerang' to the 'Palace'.

Meanwhile, Bobby Naumov will be Marconi's new coach of the Youth team.

❑❑❑❑

MANY times most of us say stupid things which are invariably, (and thankfully), quickly forgotten.

However when high-profiled people make lunatic statements, these 'clangers' are quickly embossed on steel and rapidly repeated all over the planet.

For example, former England wizard World Cup midfielder, Paul Gascoigne, once let fly with:

"I never predict anything. And I never will."

Got it?

Or some one like the former England captain and ace striker, Alan Shearer, who once dropped the clanger:

"Football is not just about scoring goals.

"It's about winning."

Murder.

Or some one like our very own super-marksman, Mark Viduka.

The 'V Bomber' once seriously, but ludicrously, let fly with the unbelievable statement of:

"I wouldn't be bothered if we lost every game, just as long as we won the League."

Amazing stuff.

What about former Manchester United's incredible engineering-midfielder, the great Ray Wilkins.

The wonderful Wilkins once hurled down one of the best 'bumpers', by sadly stating:

"Unfortunately, we, (Manchester United), keep kicking ourselves in the foot."

Incredible stuff from a legendary genius.

❑❑❑❑

Still on stupid statements made.

Want to read a couple more?

Closer to home, our very 'own' Terry Venables once spat out to the media:

"If you can't stand the heat in the dressing room, then get out of the kitchen."

Fabulous tripe.

All of the above people would make great Soccer Journos.

Even the great Pele himself once dropped a memorable clanger.

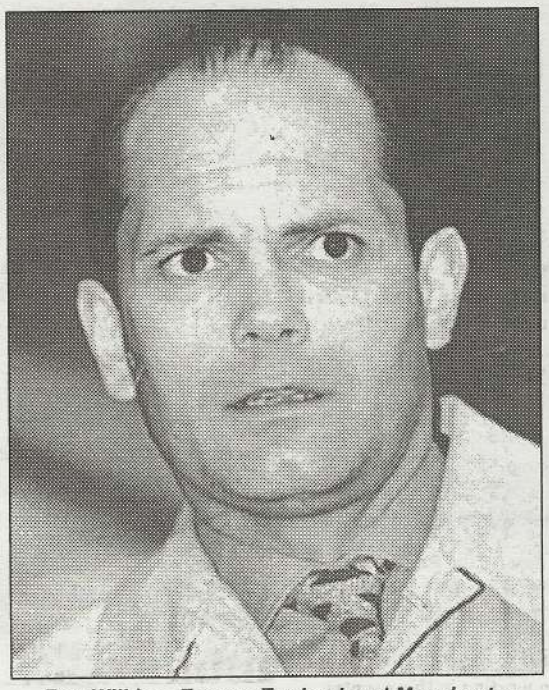
The Black Pearl once predicted to the Press:

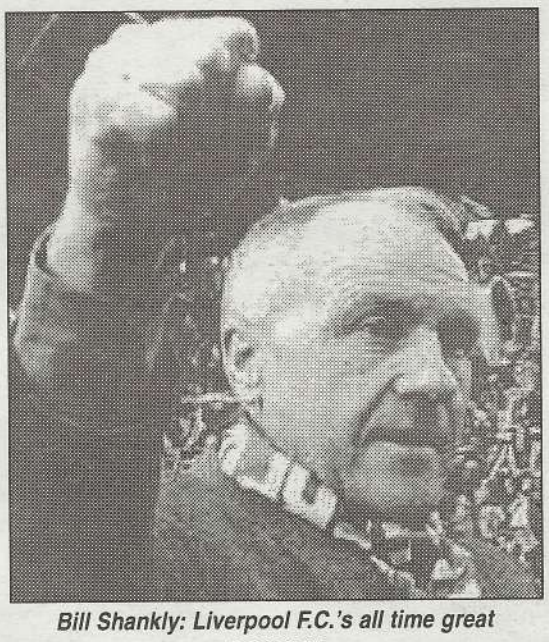
"I think that England, France, Germany and Holland will be joining Brazil in the Semi finals."

Can you believe this?

But every now and then, we come across classics.

We have all heard the odd passionate, diamond-hard of a statements, that really drive home someone's undeniable and powerful feelings for the great team he follows.


Ray Wilkins: Former England and Manchester United great.


Bill Shankly: Liverpool F.C.'s all time great manager.

This never to be forgotten statement, (and well recorded), was made by that giant Scot and legendary Liverpool manager, the one and only, the great Bill Shankly.

'Shanks' once said: "If Everton, (neighbouring Club to Liverpool), were playing at the bottom of my garden, I'd pull the curtains across."

Still on the great 'Shanks'.

Once the media questioned the towering grey-haired Scot, which team did he highly rate AFTER, (his), Liverpool?

In his growling brogue, the Great Man answered:

"Liverpool's Reserves."

❑❑❑❑

JOHNNY BUONAVOGLIA, has signed up with the Parramatta Power.

The former mobile Newcastle United striker who resides in Sydney, was told by Newcastle that he must live in Newcastle for the coming season.

It seems that Buonavoglia wasn't prepared to do this.

Recently the little bloke that's been tagged, 'the Jockey', got married and is currently on his honeymoon over in Italy.

David Mitchell the Power's head coach signed up 27-year-old midfielder, Wayne O'Sullivan from England. O'Sullivan as played with Swindon Town and Plymouth and if fact won Plymouth's 'Player of the Year' last season.

The Parramatta Power starts its pre-season training by the end of this week.

❑❑❑❑

MARCONI TRAVEL, advised us last night that they have almost completed compiling special packages for Australia's last World Cup Qualifier in Melbourne next November.

Packages that include airfares and accommodation are expected to be ready for sale within the next 10 days.

John Aloisi: Scores his first goal in Spain last Sunday.

Marconi Travel can be contacted on 02 9728 1900.

❑❑❑❑

JOHN ALOISI, last Sunday scored his first goal for his new Spanish Club, Osasuna against Burgos.

In the first pre-season match, Aloisi scored with a powerful header, five minutes before half-time.

As well, Burgos' custodian twice was forced to make pressure saves from two other fine efforts fired at him by Aloisi.

The Australian World Cup striker and former Coventry City top goalscorer, showed excellent early form that pleased Osasuna's coaching staff.

No doubt this piece of news will also please Australia's manager, Frank Farina.

❑❑❑❑

Johnny ('the Jockey') Buonavoglia: On his honeymoon.

I WANT THIRD TITLE WITH GLORY, SAYS HORSLEY

FROM FOE TO FRIEND ... Perth Glory midfielder Scott Miller (left) will now link-up with ex-Wollongong Wolves' skipper, Matt Horsley.

By Richard Kreider

Few would argue that Perth Glory scored a coup when they secured the services of former Wollongong Wolves captain Matt Horsley for the 2001-02 season under new coach Mich d'Avray. After eleven years as a Wolf in a Wollongong shirt and despite winning a championship double, the Wolves life-member explains to ABSW correspondent ***RICHARD KREIDER****, his reasons for moving across the Nullabor and why the dynamic midfielder wants nothing less than a third NSL title.*

Welcome to Perth Matt. Which of the organisation, the fans and the money convinced you to head West?

I can look back at eleven good years with Wollongong but a lot of things have transpired just over the last couple of months.

So when the Perth offer came through I jumped at the chance. The fans and the club organisation were the main reasons I came across.

The money wasn't really an issue because another club came up with a similar offer.

Nobody wants to play in front of two or three hundred people. But here every second week, you will be playing in front of sixteen, seventeen thousand people.

While that will be a buzz, it will also keep you on the edge because you don't want to let those same fans down.

The people of Perth Glory have done everything possible to make the transition of living in the west as comfortable as possible. We thought we might get swallowed up in the enormity of such a club, but thankfully it is very much family orientated.

We are still in the process of getting the house into order and the kids into school but should be settled in by the time pre-season training gets underway.

What does Wollongong put in their water, after also clinching the NBA title.I went and watched the Hawks quite a lot and they have great team spirit like us?

Wollongong is a pretty unique area but if you get the right chemistry of players as we had, you can achieve a lot. Much was said when Nick (Theodorakopoulos) left but we still had a good nucleus of players.

And when Ron (Corry) came in, he bought good players such as Robbie Middleby and Dean Anastasiadis from Carlton when that club folded.

They did a great job in helping the Wolves get the back-to-back titles, as did Scott Chipperfield and Paul Reid who certainly deserves a chance overseas as much as 'Chippers'.

The Wolves might have lost a few players, but you still shouldn't write them off. Everyone did last year and look what happened!!

Beware of the Wolf!

With back to back championships under your belt, how difficult will it be to stay motivated to win another with Perth Glory?

I won't need any motivation to want to win a third championship Richard. I am always trying to improve my Soccer and right now my first aim is to get fitter and stronger.

Perth finished fifth last season and would have been very disappointed with that. But things might have been different if the Wolves hadn't achieved that 6-2 victory against Adelaide in the last round.

Second spot is a lot easier to get into a grand final than it is to fight from fifth position.

South Melbourne and Wollongong have been badly-depleted after the loss of key players. This must go in Glory's favour for the 2001-02 title I think it will.

Perth have also lost a couple of players but they retained the nucleus from last season and many have been together for about two or three years now.

That's what happened at Wollongong. It took us that long to blend together and as you've seen, the Wolves played some really good football. We knew each other's moves, each other's strengths and weaknesses. With South Melbourne being seriously depleted, I think the chance of Perth gaining a top-two slot this time around is very achievable.

What other clubs do you think will push hard this season?

With the likes of Micky Petersen as coach and new signings such as Con Boutsianis, the Kingz will not be the easy-beats they were in the past.

Newcastle has picked up good players too like Middleby, Matthew Bingley and Scott Baillie so they should be treated with just as much respect.

Let's look at that memorable final at Subicao two seasons ago. It was a fantastic game that kept everyone spellbound. Do you still think about that day?

The game was the greatest Soccer moment of my life. Particularly the fact it is one everyone still talks about. Not one say five or six years ago.

Everyone can remember who won that game at Subiaco Oval. The atmosphere, the way the game went from 3-0 down to 3-3 then the drama of extra-time followed by the added spice of the penalty shootout. It is going to live long in my memory.

The Glory would have learned a lot from that defeat of course.

Any match that is 3-0 up should have been game over but Nick changed a couple of players like George Souris and Mark Robinson for the second half, which really changed things around.

But as we know, any football code can be a funny game sometimes. The Kangaroo - Essendon Aussie Rules clash the other week is a prime example, where the 'Roos were leading by 69 points at one stage, only to lose by twelve.

Not taking away the fact you won the championship twice, should the home and away leg of the season determine the winners like they do everywhere else in the world?

I think the minor-premiers deserve the greater accolades because they are the most-consistent side. But having said that we might never have seen the game we saw at Subiaco Oval!

I still think however, the acclaim should go to the minor-premiers because they are the best team over the season.

But this is the way Australia plays their finals competitions in a lot of sports.

With what happened last season where two clubs fell by the wayside, what is your overall opinion of the competition at the moment?

I hope Soccer Australia starts to show direction and I don't mean backwards!

They have their judgement on what's best for Australian Soccer and I have mine. Perth Glory should however, be deemed the benchmark for Australian Soccer clubs if the competition is to appeal to mainstream Australia.

With the demise of rugby league at the moment, Soccer has a great opportunity to improve on its popularity, particularly if we qualify for the World Cup.

That will really lift the profile of our code in this country. We also have to make the domestic game more appealing to the young players to stop them from going overseas.

Then perhaps we will have the likes of Channel Seven showing local Soccer at a better time slot than eleven o'clock at night.

Will Soccer ever become a force in Australia and challenge to become the number one sport?

Australians love their sport. We are the best at rugby league and union, cricket etc, so there is no reason why Soccer cannot be up there with them.

There are a lot of influential people running scared with what Soccer can do in this country. But it is most critical we make the World Cup though.

I think we have already seen the best (Socceroo) team ever seen on paper to participate in a qualifying phase of a World Cup. But just imagine a team with Viduka and Kewell up front, a midfield containing Okon and Skoko, a backline with your Vidmar's and Popovic's as well as a plethora of goalkeepers for Frank (Farina) to choose from.

Any regrets about not playing overseas?

I would of liked to have gone, but I didn't have a Manager then. And although I have contacts now, they are not looking at people my age. They want 16 and 17 year olds so they can mould them into what they want. I certainly have no regrets though.

How would you feel about another Glory - Wollongong Grand Final?

It would be a very special occasion for me, although I would have to do the right thing by my current employer! I would like to see Wollongong up there again, but I have to say Perth deserve to win this time around.

They have raised the profile of the game here and been a championship bridesmaid, so they deserve it now.

SHAPE UP OR SHIP OUT, ANGRY KEEGAN TELLS COLOSIMO

• Colosimo (right) poses with Manchester City coach, Kevin Keegan last week.

By Emma Nwaneri

Manchester City manager, Kevin Keegan last week threatened to send new boy, Simon Colosimo packing if he fails to measure-up to expected standard at the English first division side.

In an extraordinary dressing room, dressing-down, Keegan accused Colosimo of unseriousnes after the Aussie turned in a woeful performance in pre-season friendly.

Following a scrappy draw with third division club Scunthorpe, late last week, Keegan raved and ranted at some of his players, at the end of the 2-2 draw, singling-out Colosimo for stinging criticism. Keegan attacked casual defending by Colosimo, who unfortunately also scored an own goal in a poor individual display, and said "he would be on the way back to Australia" if he continued to play like that.

The bitter tirade from Keegan came just days after Colosimo debuted for the famous club and attracted all-round praise for his defensive qualities.The youing Aussie international had even gone on to reflect positively on his maiden appearance, stressing his confidence in improving as the season progressed.

The Scunthorpe tantrum came as a huge shock to most of the players who had expressed their pleasure over Keegan's training methods which have centred around ball work.

It is even more bewildering for Colosimo who just days earlier voiced his surprise at the sheer size of his new club, Manchester City after turning out for the English first division side in his maiden appearance. "When I first looked around, I was surprised how big the club is," he confessed. "It's a monster - but everyone has made me really welcome here. I feel right at home already."

The Aussie international made a long-awaited debut for City earlier in the week and it turned out quite well as the division one club ran away 2-1 over English conference side, Halifax Town. The game attracted an admirable 20,000 crowd, which for a pre-season friendly, was quite surprising to Colosimo.The crowd was also streets ahead the few thousands which Colosimo is used to at his estwhile club, South Melbourne in the National Soccer League.

During the Halifax game also, many City fans were delighted with Colosimo's ability to bring the ball out of defence." I think the first ten minutes were a little bit nerve-racking to be honest but, after that, I enjoyed the half a lot," said Colosimo.

"I sometimes play with a little bit too much flair for everybody's liking,but that's the type of football I play and it depends a lot on what the score is, which determines how I play."

Colosimo has settled in well despite admitting to be overwhelmed at first by the size of the club that he had joined. Colosimo will have to grow accustomed to, with the pace and standard of Division One football much different to the NSL.

"The pace is much faster here, training is sharper and quicker than it was at home. I've enjoyed it though, and think things will get better for me as time goes on."

Although pushing for a first team place is his immediate ambition, he is realistic about his chances. "The squad has been together for a few seasons now and I have to break it up if I want a first team spot that I'd love."

Colosimo also portrayed the optimism that has enveloped Maine Road, saying "I haven't seen other First Division teams but the way everyone has been talking in training they're very optimistic about our chances of moving back into the Premier League."

Colosimo only concluded his transfer from South Melbourne a fortnight back after an initial hiccup over obtaining a work permit. British immigration officials reportedly refused him entry when he first turned-up at Heathrow airport.

They claimed he was ineligible to work in Britain since he failed to meet a 70% requirement for international engagements involving Australia.

The whole thing was eventually sorted-out after the intervention of Manchester City as well as Soccer Australia bigwigs.

With such sharp verbal vibes coming from the same man who stood by him throughout his transfer saga, Colosimo's English odyssey has clearly got off to a rocky start.

It is believed however that Keegan himself is slowly realising the size of his task at Maine Road and he has little money to strengthen the squad — unless he sells some key players first. The normally taciturn ex-England supremo is believed to be under pressure by directors of the club to take it back to the premier division where it spent a very brief season, last year.

For Bosnich, it's return of the Mark

Aussie international goaltender, Mark Bosnich has put up his hand for inclusion into the Socceroos for the final round of World Cup qualifying games against the South Americans, later in the year.

After starting in a midweek friendly game for his English premiership side, Chelsea, Bosnich has voiced his desire to again fight for the Number One shirt in both club and country.

"I'm in fine shape. Fitter and faster than I've been for years", he told British tabloid, *Daily Star* last week.

"I'm happy with the way things have progressed since my operation and can't wait to get into action in the new season".

Bosnich was troubled with a persistent knee injury for most part of the last season, which led reigning English champions Manchester United manager Sir Alex Fergusson to brand him overweight and eventually offload him at the start of the year to Chelsea.

Interestingly, last week's pre-season friendly between Chelsea and third division side, Leyton Orient, was Bosnich's first game on English soil in 15 months.

It was also his first appearance for Chelsea since joining them in January from Manchester United.

Bosnich put in a flawless performance throughout the 46minutes he was on duty before being replaced at half-time by Dutchman, Ed de Goey. Bosnich still however has to contend with De Goey and Chelsea's Italian number one, Carlo Cudicini before assuming the mantle of first choice goalie at Chelsea.

From last week's display however, the Aussie star looked to have impressed Chelsea's Italian-born manager, Claudio Ranieri.

If successful, Bosnich will then have to displace current Socceroos number one goalkeeper, Mark Schwarzer in a bid to lay claim to Australia's starting shirt.

Schwarzer impressed to no end during the recent Confederations' Cup competition as well as the World Cup play-offs against New Zealand. He conceeded just three goals in a total of seven games spanning both competitions.

Mark Bosnich: "I'm in fine shape. Fitter and faster than I've been for years".

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PARRAMATTA EAGLES SOCCER ACADEMY

ACADEMY TEAM COACHES

Parramatta Eagles and Manchester United Football Club have recently entered into an agreement to operate a Soccer Academy based in Sydney and covering the Oceania region.

Academy players will be competing in the New South Wales Super Youth League and Cadet League competitions.

The Academy is seeking applications for Academy Team Coaches for Season 2002.
The successful applicant will:

- Have attained, or be currently undertaking, a senior coaching (Level 2) qualification.
- Have a strong level of experience and success in coaching elite youth teams.
- Be able to work as part of a team within the Academy structure.

Coaches will be required to work within the Manchester United Youth Development curriculum, reporting to the Director of Coaching and working with specialist Academy Coaching staff.

We seek applicants who are looking to make a long-term commitment to the Academy and be part of the most exciting development in elite Youth Soccer in the Oceania region.

Please submit your application, including resume, to:

The Chairman
Academy Management Council
Parramatta Eagles Soccer Academy
Melita Stadium, Everley Road,
Chester Hill. NSW. 2162

OFFICIAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PARTNER OF MANCHESTER UNITED IN OCEANIA

Letters to the Editor

SBS' Incisive Insight

Dear Sir,

Last Thursday at 8.30 PM, SBS's investigative program INSIGHT hosted by award-winning journalist Alan Sunderland attempted to exhume the corpse which is Soccer Australia, conduct an autopsy and try to define what has gone wrong!

This by any stretch of the imagination was no easy feat.

As spokesperson for STAND, Seven Talks And Never Delivers, I had the pleasure of being interviewed for this story. I'm sure I spoke for the thousands of like-minded Soccer fans when I said our game would be better off without the current Soccer Australia administration.

During the week that Channel 7 lost the rights to the AFL it became public that the Rugby Union (the other code that Seven owns) had already had discussions with Seven about enhancing the coverage of their game, preferred timeslots , expanding their league from 12 to 16 teams. Yes, it's no misprint — EXPAND.

All the while, what did our governing body do?

Well it appears they did the reverse. After having spent thousands on accountants and lawyers on the new restructure is was determined that the NSL should shrink and not expand?

Where was Soccer Australia's press release saying they had deep and meaningful discussions with Channel 7?

Where was the press release stating that SA was pushing for a better free to air time slot?

All this talk of new board, new blood is as worthy as watching grass grow, why? because it sounds so very familiar, It sounds exactly like all the other promises we have been told about. How SA is going to spend this and spend that! Well we're still waiting, our illustrious former Chairman Basil Scarsella said earlier this year "the restructuring will go ahead, the teams will be reduced and it will happen" well where is it?

We will never have decent administrators unless an independent body is left to oversee the machinations of the secret society, because lets face it, they will never sack themselves now will they?

Shame on "the stakeholders too. Of all the people that currently influence and choose the powers that be, it is your lackluster ambition that's supposed to keep the bastards honest.

I believe the Insight story was a real eye opener.

C Monteleone,
Donnybrook, VIC.

Javier Saviola: Argentine teenage star now to lace boots for Barcelona.

SAVIOLA THE SENSATION

Dear Sir,

As a regular reader of your Soccer paper, will it be possible we get a fixture of English Premier League and Serie A?

Plus a list of all transfers of players in England and Italy.

I would like to thankyou for all results and pictures from the FIFA World Youth Championships.

It looks like all Soccer fans will get another star to look at in Javier Saviola.

J. Muscat,
Melbourne. VIC.

BRINGING SENEGAL DOWNUNDER

Dear Sir,

Oh, what a feeling ... can everyone please help get SENEGAL to come downunder for their preparation towards the World cup, which they amazingly just qualified for?

That is my biggest challenge now. I am leaving for Dakar, Senegal on Thursday and on arrival there, my first priority would be to meet with the Senegalese sports minister and try to convince him that Australia is the best place for the Senegalese team to get prepared for the World Cup.

I am sure the women's basketball team, which was here for the Olympic games last year,will agree with me.

I urge all my fellow Aussies to help me get the Senegalese team into Sydney and with the Socceroos well-placed to also qualify, I think it would be wonderful.

What more, both countries will be afforded the chance of playing against each other in friendly tune-ups prior to the World Cup finals proper.

Omar Ndiaye,
Bankstown, NSW

Australia's national team players from L-R, Con Boutsianis, Tony Popovic, Steve Corica and Kevin Muscat in training. The team is currently enjoying a fine spell in FIFA rankings.

DANDENONG DRAG VSF TO FIFA

My name is Samson Elmazi and I'm the coach of the Dandenong Thunder Soccer Club in the Victorian Premier League. I write to inform you in relation to a complaint to FIFA on behalf of Dandenong Thunder Soccer Club.

A certain club has used an ineligible player for one particular match and for once the VSF were alarmed about the situation. That particular club took the three points on the day.

It was found that the player was an ex-NSL player who had made more than four appearances for a NSL club in season 2000/2001.

The federation immediately disqualified the player from the league but the final result of the game still stood. They said it was an administrative error and that they acted accordingly.

We the club complained that the three points should have been awarded to the opposing club and we now at Dandenong Thunder because of that error now face relegation to the Victorian State League Division 1.

Under the VSF regulations and or in any sporting event around the world an ineligibility is definitely deemed not to be a win for the guilty club.

Player in Question: Mark Silic (St Albans Saints) Played in more than 4 NSL matches in Season 2000/2001 for Sydney United.

Samson Elmazi,
Coach, Dandenong
Thunder SC,VIC

FRANCE TOO EXPENSIVE!

Dear Sir,

Soccer Australia can't pull the wool over my eyes. They are charging expensive prices for tickets for the friendly between Australia and France. Only die-hard Aussies will pay the money.

Most of them don't even follow soccer but people like myself and others also from Europe who follow the game know that no way in this world will France bring out their full team.

Let's face the facts. The game is played on the 1st November which is on a Sunday and anybody who follows the game will know that most of the French team play in England with Arsenal and Chelsea. The goalkeeper is with Man Utd and the season will then be under way in England.

So will the managers of Arsenal and Chelsea let their star players come all the way down under just for a friendly game? No!

I don't think so. The players will be wanted by their teams to play in the best soccer competition in the world English Premier League.

I will keep my money in my pocket until I see what kind of team France will send out here, besides the MCG is not the place to play soccer.

D. Gardner
Hampton Park, VIC.

FIFA's timely honour for Oz Soccer

Dear Sir,

FIFA have declared the Socceroos as the team of the year no thanks to them. Interestingly FIFA have spared no effort to promote soccer in Japan and the USA for scant return so far. The Socceroos have been underated for sometime now.

Wynton Rufer, the highly regarded former NZ player expressed this view in an interview that barely rated a mention long ago.

If FIFA want to do something really useful for OZ soccer they could use their influence to ensure that the Australian public get the same top class TV coverage of Japan Korea 2002 as SBS provided at France 98. This is very important and as it stands now the TV coverage will be minimal.

With all the accolades being showered on OZ soccer players I hope all concerned will keep their feet on the ground. Remember many of the same people now lauding OZ soccer were only yesterday sledging it mercilessly. Most so called experts have feet of clay. I wonder what "expert" coach Raul Blanco thinks of the FIFA award. Only months ago, after the disasterous Olympic soccer tournament he told the *Sydney Morning Herald* that OZ soccer players are not as good as they think they are.

One thing is certain he (Blanco) is definitely not as good a coach as he thinks he is and this is not just my opinion.

R. Melor
Bondi. NSW.

Editor's Note: Blanco's quote from the *SMH* was actually that some Oz players are not as good as they are. Not all.

OFF THE CROSSBAR

By Allan Crisp

STADIUM'S FINEST SAVE

Hindmarsh Stadium, scene of many magnificent goalkeeping saves, was last week saved for soccer when a deal was struck to ensure its future.

It took almost as long to negotiate the happy ending as would the making of an epic movie, but the South Australian State Government has at last bought the facility from the Charles Sturt Council.

The Council voted to sell the land on which the stadium is built for $1.7 million, completing a deal that also includes the Governmental transfer of three blocks of land in nearby West Croydon.

The blocks situated in Cedar Avenue and William Street will be dedicated to park-lands, the titles of which will be transferred to the council in trust.

Charles Sturt Mayor Harold Anderson said the Government had, "done the right thing by the residents.

"It's been an exhausting process and I'm pleased with the way council has addressed the issue," he said.

Deputy Premier Rob Kerin applauded the decision, saying, "The decision gives the soccer community a lot more certainty, us well as giving us (the Government) more control of the use of the stadium."

A relieved South Australian Soccer Federation General Manager, Tony Farrugia said, "We can now get on with the job of promoting and developing soccer in this State in the secure knowledge that the future of Hindmarsh Stadium as a soccer venue is assured."

The SASF ran into financial difficulties when two of its stadium tenants, the West Adelaide Sharks soccer team and the Adelaide Rams rugby league club folded.

"Our revenue was severely hit by the demise of those clubs, but of course, our expenses stayed the same and we fell into debt.

"Now we can look forward to working together with the Government to maximise the usage of the Hindmarsh Stadium, which is the only purpose-built soccer facility in Australia," Farrugia said.

The SASF is guaranteed the right to stage 30 games per season at Hindmarsh Stadium, in addition to the NSL matches involving the Adelaide City Force and any international fixtures.

In the past, Hindmarsh Stadium has been used for a rugby union super seven series and a successful pop concert featuring The Eagles."Organised concerts can be huge money spinners and we would welcome the chance to stage more of them," Farrugia said.

NO FORCED DELAY

Fears that Adelaide City Force could be denied the use of Hindmarsh Stadium for its first three home games while the pitch is being resurfaced have been laid to rest.

A common sense decision to switch the timing of the pitch upgrade from October to January when City has consecutive away matches has solved that problem and also avoided City having to play its early games away.

City is scheduled to play away on January 4 and January 11, allowing more than three weeks for the necessary work to be completed and for the pitch to be returned to its pristine condition.

LIVE, LEARN AND PLAY

For six productive years the SASF has been conducting training camps in Adelaide for visiting Japanese clubs.

It now intends to extend that concept to embrace its "Live, Learn and Play" program that involves the exchange of junior players between South Australia and Japan.

The proposal that an annual exchange be established with one Under 15 player (male or female) from each federation team (by-annually, in rotation — 12 each year) would spend four weeks in the corresponding prefecture in Japan playing soccer with the sister club.

The youngster would preside in private accommodation and go to school in Japan.

At the same time, 12-Under 15 players from the corresponding prefectures in Japan would spend four weeks in Adelaide, playing with the local club, living in private accommodation and attending a local school in the local council district.

Claudio Pelosi (right): Adelaide City's star striker rumoured to be influencing the coming of another Italian import to City.

An important component of this venture is that no family would bear any cost for their child to participate, as the cost would be shared by the SASF, the relevant club and council and the SA Government.

The working plan proposal is that the exchange program be held in May/June, with the first to be conducted in 2002.

DUNDEE ZORAN

Adelaide City Force coach Zoran Matic is not shedding crocodile tears over his recent holiday in the Top End of Australia, but he was hit by Adelaide's chill weather on his return.

Matic will resume official training for his NSL squad on Monday when City's star striker Claudio Pelosi is expected back from his Italian holiday.

Early reports suggest that Pelosi will be accompanied by a fellow countryman who is a recognised sweeper.

That computes with the earlier comment by Matic that his priority was to sign midfielder, (Kiwi, Jeff Campbell) and a defender to bolster his squad.

Matic was one of several coaches hoping to sign Youth Socceroo Wayne Shroj, before the Olympic Sharks hooked the talented young Queenslander.

"Yes, I always prefer to sign midfielders or defenders," Matic said. "I would never go out to sign a striker, but if one comes along by accident, that's a different story."

BAD TIMING

Premier League teams Metro Stars and Olympic FC have lost a star player with just five rounds left to complete the season.

Metro Stars midfield ace Steve DeGioviannello has jetted off to Chile for trials, while Olympic FC defender Damien Harley has flown to the USA.

Harley's immediate plans are to wed his American sweetheart before seeking a club.

Regardless of the outcome of his trials, DeGioviannello intends to visit Harley in the US where both could seek star-spangled fame on either the outdoor or indoor soccer pitches.

Metro Stars coach Mario Boffa said he was disappointed at the timing of DeGioviannello's departure and the fact that he was given scant notice of his intentions.

Olympic FC boss Branko Milosevic also expressed disappointment that Harley had left, but took a softer approach.

"I'm sorry to lose Damien, but he's given us good service and I wish him all the best," Milosevic said.

CONFUSION

According to referee Barry Panella's team sheet Campbelltown City's winning goal that earned the points for the Red Devils in its 1-0 win over Port Lion Pirates in the round 17 joust was scored by Joe Barbaro.

However, Campbelltown coach Jan Kierno is absolutely certain that buzz bomb Barbaro was the provider who supplied the pass for Caperna to net the only goal of the keen contest.

There was further confusion when, on the advice of an assistant referee, little Johnny Manka was sent off for allegedly kicking away a boot of an opponent after the boot had flown loose off the opponent's foot.

Manka, who had previously been booked by Panella, professed his innocence, but the assistant was convinced he had the right player.

Another Port Lion player then emerged to confess that he was the boot kicker, but the verdict stood, as will the automatic one-game suspension of Manka.

And rightly or wrongly, Barbaro's name will be recorded as the official scorer.

Allan Crisp can be heard on the 5RPH (1197AM) Marshall Thompson Homes/Pacific Real Estate Breakfast Soccer Show each Tuesday from 7am-8.30am, along with Croydon Kings coach Phil Scardigno, Peter Millar, the Advertiser soccer writer Meno Toutsidis and producer Robbie Popplestone.

Former Australian international John Perin, Crisp and Millar gather for the 5RPH SOS (Soccer On Sunday) program each Sabbath from 8.30am-9.30am to present the latest local, overseas and interstate news and information and interviews.

Queanbeyan's Tomeski eyes Cosmos

By Graham Cooke

Vlatko Tomeski

These are busy days for Canberra College student Vlatko Tomeski.

Last week he was selected in the ACT squad to play in the Australian Schools Championships in Gosford in August, but there was hardly time for the youngster to celebrate.

He is playing a key role for his club, Queanbeyan City, as they seek to regain a place in the ACT Premiership. Already this season he has knocked in 27 goals at either State League first-division, or under 19 levels.

Such prolific goal scoring will certainly bring him to the notice of Canberra Cosmos officials selecting a squad for the summer campaign in the National Youth League "but my priority at the moment is doing my best to get Queanbeyan promotion," he said.

City have been a yo-yo side in recent years, not quite good enough for the Premiership, but too good for the next level down. Poor administration has also been a problem.

But club officials believe they have got things right at last, and are ready to challenge Monaro as Queanbeyan's leading club.

South Australia Premier League Results

ROUND 18

PREMIER LEAGUE

Croydon Kings (Perin)	1	Blue Eagles (Artone 2, Brooks)	3
Raiders	0	Port Lion (Paleka)	1
Campbelltown (J. Barbaro)	1	Modbury Jets (Trimboli, Donovan)	2
White City Woodville (Petrov)	1	Metro Stars (Day 3, D'Arci)	4
Playford Patriots (Anastasiou)	1	Olympic FC (Alvanese)	1
Port Pirie Spirit (McGuiness)	1	Adelaide City (Monie)	1

STATE LEAGUE

Panthers	0	Birkalla (Tsekinis 3, McGregor)	4
Cumberland Foxes (Coombs)	1	Cobras	0
Hills Hawks (Keegan, Rodriguez)	2	Salisbury Apaches (Hughes)	1
Seaford Surfers (Grant, Coad, Baxter)	3	Northern Demons (Salvemini, Musci)	2
Para Hills Knights (Gooding, Francis)	2	Noarlunga Bulldogs	0
Enfield Falcons	0	Western Strikers	0

ROUND 19

PREMIER LEAGUE

FRIDAY, AUGUST 3

Modbury Jets v Raiders

SATURDAY, AUGUST 4

Adelaide City v White City
Metro Stars v Campbelltown
Port Lion v Croydon Kings
Blue Eagles v Playford Patriots
Olympic FC v Port Pirie Spirit

STATE LEAGUE

SATURDAY, AUGUST 4

Western Strikers v Seaford
Northern Demons v Hills Hawks
Salisbury Apaches v Cumberland
Cobras v Panthers
Birkalla v Para Hills Knights
Noarlunga Bulldogs v Enfield Falcons

Mike Milovanovic: "I thought we had something going."

MILAN REFLECTS ON TUMULTOUS COSMOS SPELL

By Graham Cooke

Former Canberra Cosmos coach Mike Milovanovic was back at his old job with the ACT Academy of Sport last week, disappointed but determined to look to the future after his turbulent six-month spell with the National Soccer League club.

He said he did not want to talk about the circumstances surrounding his exit. "After the reasonable amount of success we had at the end of last season, and the lift in the crowds from 1500 to around 4000, I thought we had something going, but it was not to be," was his only comment.

His most immediate task now is to select an Academy squad to take part in the National Youth League. "A few of last seasonÌs players are still eligible, and we will fill the rest from trials, but no dates have been set yet," he said.

"Five of our boys from last season are currently training with the Australian Institute of Sport squad and they include Carl Valeri the national under-17 captain, and Ian Waldon who is in the Joeys train-on squad. That's a result of which all Canberra can feel proud."

He said he hoped and expected to retain good links with the Cosmos, and the aim of the Academy remained the development of talent that would eventually benefit the NSL club.

"I am still a Canberran and I want to see the Cosmos around for a long time," he said. "After all, I have an 11-year-old son, and I want him to have somewhere to go in seven or eight years, rather than have to leave Canberra."

Bulls, Bankstown get NSW League nod

Fairfield Bulls and Bankstown City Lions have been officially accepted into the 2001/2002 NSW Summer Premier League.

The presence of both teams will now lead to an expanded twelve team competition along with last season's participants, namely: Belconnen Blue Devils, Blacktown City Demons, Bonnyrigg White Eagles, Canterbury-Marrickville Olympic, Central Coast Coasties, Leichhardt Tigers, Parramatta Eagles, Penrith Panthers, St George Saints and Sutherland Sharks.

Both the Bulls and the Lions are currently competing in the NSW Winter Super League and will have little time to recover from their impending finals appearance in late August/early September before the kick-off of the summer competition on the weekend of the 20th and 21st of October.

All twelve clubs will field teams in first-grade and under-19s over 22 rounds.

Originally known as Sydney Macedonia, Bankstown City Lions, is based at Jensen Park cricket oval, in the Sydney surbub of Sefton. It has enjoyed much on-field success as it rapidly progressed through the Federation divisions.

Its more famous players include Anthony Surjan, Marshall Soper, John Filan, Bill Pilovski who all contributed to its triumph in the 1989 First Division title.

The club won its only Super League trophy in 1994, and is currently coached by Claudio Canosa, while George Jackson is the club president.

Fairfield Bulls won its first major honour in 1998 when it lifted the First Division premiership.It is based at Edensor Park, Smithfield Road and was once known as the Nineveh Eagles.

It is coached at first grade level by John Turner, who has successfully built on the club's success story of the 90s.

JAP TEAM IN CANBERRA

By Graham Cooke

A junior team from Canberra's sister city of Nara, in Japan, will be arrived in Canberra last week for a week of soccer in the capital.

Opponents for the squad of senior high school students will be Marist College, Belwest on Sunday, the ACT Academy of Sport on Monday and St Francis Xavier High School today, Tuesday.

There will also be time for training sessions and a visit to the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve.

Matches between Nara and Canberra have become a regular feature of the sister city relationship in recent years. Competition is restricted to juniors as the structure of soccer in Japan means Nara has no suitable senior opponents for the ACT.

SOCCER WOMAN

By Janene Mar

ALAGICH COPS SERIOUS INJURY

Dianne Alagich (left): Injured.

Matildas defender Dianne Alagich suffered a disheartening anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injury to her right knee last week , whilst training with WUSA outfit Bay Area CyberRays.

It is undecided at this stage whether the 22-year-old will remain in the US or return home for reconstruction surgery.

A surprise mid-season signing in May, Alagich had certainly established herself in the team since making her professional debut coming off the bench. At the same time, the CyberRays were enjoying an unbeaten streak which has lifted them from near bottom to second place.

The CyberRays' magic run ended with a loss to San Diego last Wednesday, the the first game Alagich was unable to take her place in the side.

This is the South Australian's second knee reconstruction, the first injury stalling her budding Matildas career in 1996. She bravely fought her way back into the green and gold in time to earn World Cup and Olympic Games selection, and is indeed a most vital member of the Matildas outfit.

YOUNG MATILDAS IN GOSFORD FOR W-CUP

Get down to Gosford this weekend to witness the Young Matildas take their first steps towards the inaugural FIFA Women's World Youth Championship.

The players will be out to impress new Coach Mike Mulvey as the side takes on the senior teams of Singapore and Vietnam, plus the NSW Institute of Sport. The tournament is being held concurrently with the Australian Secondary Schools Championships at Pluim Park, whilst the Young Matildas will also feature at North Power Stadium.

The Young Matildas arrive in Gosford on 3 August, with the tournament commencing Sunday 5 August.

AUSTRALIA

This 19-strong team is recently-appointed National Youth Coach Mike Mulvey's first selection, and significant in that it represents the first step in the full selection process as we work toward qualification for the inaugural World Youth Championship, and hopefully competing in the event itself come August 2002.

The tournament is also the Youth Team's first since FIFA last year confirmed the establishment of the Under 19 event.

With no first-hand knowledge of the players outside of Queensland, Mulvey had to rely on the input of the other NTC program Coaches to make this initial selection.

The pressure will be on to perform under match conditions against unknown senior international opposition, as well as display good qualities off the field.

Unfortunately, the Young Matildas have only a day and a half together before their opening match against Singapore.

VIETNAM

Vietnam's senior National Team has a strong Aussie link - their Head Coach is none other than Steve Darby, Australian Women's National Coach 1989-91.

The Vietnam Squad are professional players, having immersed themselves in fulltime training since February this year at the State Sports Centre.

By comprehensively defeating archrival Thailand in the final 5-1, the 'Smiling Tigers' as they are affectionately known, recently won the Hanoi Open championship.

Watch out for captain Luong, playmaker Lan, and sweeper Hanh, each of whom have received professional offers to play in China.

SINGAPORE

Singapore's senior National Team, known as the 'Lionesses', is an extremely young outfit with fourteen of their twenty-strong touring side aged twenty-one or under. The women's National Team was only first formed last year and is led by Head Coach Mohd Basir.

The Singaporeans are making a concerted effort to boost their women's set-up, and are busily preparing for September's South East Asian Games in Malaysia and the Asian Women's Championship in Chinese Taipei in December.

Earlier this year, Singapore were comprehensively beaten by both Malaysia and the Phillippines, although they have also recorded an away win to Malaysia, and defeated Guam and the Phillippine Youth Team.

Landslide win returns South's board

By Bert van Bedaf

The new South Melbourne board held its first meeting immediately after the election to elect its office bearers, with George Vasilopoulos returned as president.

Vasilopoulos, 49, was recently awarded the Australian Sports Medal in recognition of his 25-year contribution to soccer in Victoria.

"I just want to thank everybody who stuck by me. Through thick and thin they have shown their true belief in me," said Vasilopoulos, who has now become the longest-serving president in the history of the club.

"We are all grateful to be elected by our club members and we take that responsibility very seriously as we work towards achieving more success, both on and off the park, in the next decade."

"Now that the elections are over, itís time to focus on important club issues, with our priority aimed at finalising the playing and coaching staff in time for the new season (starting in October)," he said.

The South board comprises president - George Vasilopoulos, chairman - Peter Mitrakas, senior vice president - Jim Karakoussis, vice president - Nick Maikousis, vice president - Peter George, secretary - Peter Kakalis, treasurer - Peter Skrepetis, and directors Manny Anezakis, Jimmy Armstrong, George Donikian, Steven Kayalicos, Panos Margaritis, Peter Nikolakopoulos, Mary Pirchan, and Nicolas Zervos.

The board also announced it will appoint a team liaison director, who will be responsible for mediating between the board and the players and coaching staff, as well as a media liaison director, who will conduct all communications between the electronic and print media.

The new board will need to improve its performance on several fronts, including player management, sponsorship, financial management and members communications, according to a confidential report as revealed in ABSW last week.

The co-called (Dennis) Hatcher report was compiled at the request of (club president George) Vasilopoulos.

The report recommended a far more transparent reporting structure with position descriptions formalised, minutes and agendas provided and planning procedures in place. Vasilopoulos said the report formed "the blueprint for the future" at South Melbourne.

Vasilopoulos thanks supporters for 'belief'

By Bert van Bedaf

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Canberra Deakin maul Monaro to regain lead

By Graham Cooke

Canberra Deakin coach Vlado Horvat is convinced his team do not need him. "With so many talented players, my job is almost irrelevant," he said after the 5-0 beating of Monaro at Riverside on Sunday.

"I just send them on to the field and tell them to enjoy themselves."

Horvat may be a trifle over-modest, but there is certainly very little comfort for the chasing teams in the ACT Premiership.

With Gungahlin Juventus having a week off, the win puts Deakin back on top of the table, and the main interest is now centred on which teams will get another crack at them in the end-of-season play-offs.

Increasingly these are unlikely to include Monaro. The Queanbeyan team have now gone six weeks without a win and are rapidly losing touch with the top four. Even coach Steve Bryant was struggling to see a silver lining.

"We'll have to take maximum points from our remaining five games, and on our current form we will need a miracle," he said.

With the new Canberra Cosmos coach, Antonio Alzamendi, watching from the stands, Deakin were in one of their most relentless moods.

Ivan Zelic, Mladin Rogic, Geoff Howarth and Marcial Munoz were all in sparkling form, but star billing went to Andy Ravanello, the tough-tackling midfielder scoring one goal and laying on another for Marko Perinovic in a performance which had National Soccer League written all over it.

It was a long, miserable afternoon in the winter sunshine for Monaro. Veterans like Jimmy Baxter and John Nelson must have wondered who they had offended to deserve games like this at the end of their long and distinguished careers, but at least there was some substance to their play.

Ivan Zelic: On target for Canberra Deakin

Some of their teammates seemed to be drifting in and out of existence like lost souls and there was some foundation for Bryantís criticism when he said there were players in the side who no longer had the will to compete.

"The squad is very thin and it is difficult to change them around," he said. "They were outplayed and there are no excuses."

Munoz set Deakin on the winning way with a seventh-minute goal set up by Rogic, and an accurately hit low drive by Zelic made it 2-0 at half time.

Perinovic had a simple tap-in from a pass by Munoz and then Ravanello took over, a powerful run and a shot past goalkeeper Jimmy Carr, and the set-up for Perinovic's second.

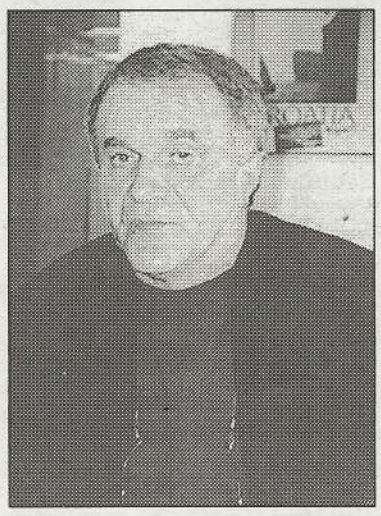
Such is Deakinís embarrassment of riches that Tony Lemezina was kept waiting on the bench until the 68th minute. His appearance delighted a Deakin crowd already in festival mood, but he was hardly needed.

Apart from the absent Juventus all the top teams won. Capital City Suns got over last week's thrashing by Canberra Olympic to deliver one of their own to the University of Canberra, winning 7-0.

Adam Williams scored four; Steve Lee, Goran Josifoski and Shane Lyons added the others.

Olympic kept third place with a routine 4-0 win over Weston Creek Royals, Danny Macor scoring twice, once from the penalty spot, backed by Gabby Exposito and Pino Seminara. The Creek missed a penalty.

Belconnen United had to come from a goal down to beat Tuggeranong United 2-1 with goals from Daniel Camara and Clinton Larfield.



Vlado Horvat- "With so many talented players, my job is almost irrelevant"

Premiership Ladder

ROUND 12

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Canberra Deakin	**11**	**9**	**2**	**0**	**38**	**8**	**29**
Gungahlin Juventus	11	9	0	2	40	10	27
Canberra Olympic	11	6	2	3	32	16	20
Capital City Suns	12	6	2	4	33	23	20
Belconnen United	11	6	0	5	23	18	18
Monaro	11	5	0	6	17	25	15
University of Canberra	10	2	1	7	12	35	7
Weston Creek Royals	12	2	0	10	12	51	6
Tuggeranong United	11	1	1	9	13	34	4

ENGLISH PREM

• Complete SOCCER Fixtu

Saturday, August 18, 2001
Charlton ... Everton ...
Tottenham ... Aston Villa ...
Derby ... Blackburn ...
Leeds ... Southampton ...
Leicester ... Bolton ...
Liverpool ... West Ham ...
Man Utd ... Fulham ...
Middlesbrough ... Arsenal ...
Sunderland ... Ipswich ...

Sunday, August 19, 2001
Manchester Utd ... Fulham ...
Chelsea ... Newcastle ...

Monday, August 20, 2001
Everton ... Tottenham ...

Tuesday, August 21, 2001
Arsenal ... Leeds ...
Bolton ... Middlesbrough ...
Ipswich ... Derby ...

Wednesday, August 22, 2001
Aston Villa ... Charlton ...
Everton ... Tottenham ...
Fulham ... Sunderland ...
Newcastle ... Leicester ...
Blackburn ... Man Utd ...

Saturday, August 25, 2001
Arsenal ... Leicester ...
Blackburn ... Tottenham ...
Everton ... Middlesbrough ...
Fulham ... Derby ...
Ipswich ... Charlton ...
Newcastle ... Sunderland ...
Southampton ... Chelsea ...
West Ham ... Leeds ...

Sunday, August 26, 2001
Aston Villa ... Man Utd ...
Newcastle ... Sunderland ...

Monday, August 27, 2001
Bolton ... Liverpool ...

Saturday, September 08, 2001
Charlton ... Fulham ...
Chelsea ... Arsenal ...
Derby ... West Ham ...
Leeds ... Bolton ...
Leicester ... Ipswich ...
Liverpool ... Aston Villa ...
Man Utd ... Everton ...
Middlesbrough ... Newcastle ...
Sunderland ... Blackburn ...

Sunday, September 09, 2001
Tottenham ... Southampton ...
Charlton ... Fulham ...

Saturday, September 15, 2001
Everton ... Liverpool ...
Aston Villa ... Sunderland ...
Bolton ... Southampton ...
Derby ... Leicester ...
Fulham ... Arsenal ...
Ipswich ... Blackburn ...
Middlesbrough ... West Ham ...
Newcastle ... Man Utd ...

Sunday, September 16, 2001
Charlton ... Leeds ...
Ipswich ... Blackburn ...

Monday, September 17, 2001
Leicester ... Middlesbrough ...

Tueday, September 18, 2001
Arsenal ... Newcastle ...

Wednesday, September 19, 2001
Blackburn ... Bolton ...
Chelsea ... Charlton ...
Leicester ... Middlesbrough ...
Liverpool ... Fulham ...
Man Utd ... Derby ...
Southampton ... Ipswich ...
West Ham ... Aston Villa ...

Saturday, September 22, 2001
Arsenal ... Bolton ...
West Ham ... Newcastle ...
Blackburn ... Everton ...
Chelsea ... Middlesbrough ...
Leicester ... Fulham ...
Liverpool ... Tottenham ...
Man Utd ... Ipswich ...
Southampton ... Aston Villa ...
Sunderland ... Charlton ...

Sunday, September 23, 2001
Leeds ... Derby ...
West Ham ... Newcastle ...

Monday, September 24, 2001
Southampton ... Aston Villa ...

Saturday, September 29, 2001
Aston Villa ... Blackburn ...
Tottenham ... Man Utd ...
Bolton ... Sunderland ...
Charlton ... Leicester ...
Derby ... Arsenal ...
Everton ... West Ham ...
Ipswich ... Leeds ...
M'brough ... Southampton ...

Sunday, September 30, 2001
Newcastle ... Liverpool ...
Ipswich ... Leeds ...

Saturday, October 13, 2001
Liverpool ... Leeds ...
Aston Villa ... Fulham ...
Tottenham ... Derby ...
Bolton ... Newcastle ...
Charlton ... Middlesbrough ...
Chelsea ... Leicester ...
Ipswich ... Everton ...
Southampton ... Arsenal ...
Sunderland ... Man Utd ...

Sunday, October 14, 2001
Blackburn ... West Ham ...
Aston Villa ... Fulham ...

Monday, October 15, 2001
Tottenham ... Derby ...

Saturday, October 20, 2001
Arsenal ... Blackburn ...
West Ham ... Southampton ...
Derby ... Charlton ...
Everton ... Aston Villa ...
Fulham ... Ipswich ...
Leeds ... Chelsea ...
Leicester ... Liverpool ...
Man Utd ... Bolton ...
Middlesbrough ... Sunderland ...

Sunday, October 21, 2001
Newcastle ... Tottenham ...
Leeds ... Chelsea ...

Monday, October 22, 2001
Middlesbrough ... Sunderland ...

Wednesday, October 24, 2001
Southampton ... Liverpool ...

Saturday, October 27, 2001
Aston Villa ... Bolton ...
Tottenham ... Middlesbrough ...
Blackburn ... Leicester ...
Charlton ... Liverpool ...
Derby ... Chelsea ...
Everton ... Newcastle ...
Fulham ... Southampton ...
Ipswich ... West Ham ...
Man Utd ... Leeds ...
Sunderland ... Arsenal ...

Juan Sebastian Veron (right): Man Utd's most-expensive player in the Premiership.

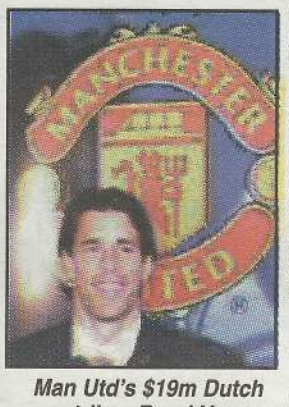
Sunday, October 28, 2001
Derby ... Chelsea ...

Monday, October 29, 2001
Blackburn ... Leicester ...

Saturday, November 03, 2001
West Ham ... Fulham ...
Bolton ... Everton ...
Leeds ... Tottenham ...
Leicester ... Sunderland ...
Liverpool ... Man Utd ...
Middlesbrough ... Derby ...
Newcastle ... Aston Villa ...
Southampton ... Blackburn ...

Sunday, November 04, 2001
Liverpool ... Man Utd ...
Arsenal ... Charlton ...

Saturday, November 17, 2001
Aston Villa ... Middlesbrough ...
Tottenham ... Arsenal ...
Blackburn ... Liverpool ...
Charlton ... West Ham ...
Derby ...
Southampton ...
Everton ...
Chelsea ...
Fulham ...
Newcastle ...
Ipswich ...
Bolton ...
Man Utd ...
Leicester ...
Sunderland ...
Leeds ...



Man Utd's $19m Dutch striker, Ruud Van Nistelrooy.

Sunday, November 18, 2001
Ipswich ...
Bolton ...

Monday,November 19, 2001
Charlton ... West Ham ...

Saturday, November 24, 2001
Arsenal ... Man Utd ...
West Ham ... Tottenham ...
Bolton ... Fulham ...
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Leeds ... Aston Villa ...
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Southampton ... Charlton ...

Sunday, November 25, 2001
Arsenal ... Man Utd ...

Saturday, December 01, 2001
Aston Villa ... Leicester ...
Tottenham ... Bolton ...
Blackburn ... Middlesbrough ...
Charlton ... Newcastle ...
Derby ... Liverpool ...
Everton ... Southampton ...
Fulham ... Leeds ...
Ipswich ... Arsenal ...
Man Utd ... Chelsea ...
Sunderland ... West Ham ...

Sunday, December 02, 2001
Everton ... Southampton ...

Saturday, December 08, 2001
Arsenal ... Aston Villa ...
Sunderland ... Chelsea ...
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Derby ... Bolton ...
Fulham ... Everton ...
Ipswich ... Newcastle ...
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Man Utd ... West Ham ...

Sunday, December 09, 2001
Arsenal ... Aston Villa ...

Saturday, December 15, 2001
Aston Villa ... Ipswich ...
West Ham ... Arsenal ...
Bolton ... Charlton ...
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Aston Villa's Swedish im will step into the slot va captain, Gareth S

MIER LEAGUE

URES FOR 2001/2002

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Tuesday, January 29, 2002

Bolton	...	Man Utd	...
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Sunderland	...	Middlesbrough	...

Wednesday, January 30, 2002

Aston Villa	...	Everton	...
Blackburn	...	Arsenal	...
Chelsea	...	Leeds	...
Liverpool	...	Leicester	...
Southampton	...	West Ham	...
Tottenham	...	Newcastle	...

Junichi Inamoto (left): Arsenal's first-ever Japanese player to debut in the premiership.

Saturday, February 02, 2002

Arsenal	...	Southampton	...
West Ham	...	Blackburn	...
Derby	...	Tottenham	...
Everton	...	Ipswich	...
Fulham	...	Aston Villa	...
Leeds	...	Liverpool	...
Leicester	...	Chelsea	...
Man Utd	...	Sunderland	...
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Newcastle	...	Bolton	...

Saturday, February 09, 2002

Aston Villa	...	Chelsea	...
Tottenham	...	Leicester	...
Bolton	...	West Ham	...
Charlton	...	Man Utd	...
Derby	...	Sunderland	...
Everton	...	Arsenal	...
Fulham	...	Blackburn	...
Ipswich	...	Liverpool	...
Middlesbrough	...	Leeds	...
Newcastle	...	Southampton	...

Saturday, February 23, 2002

Arsenal	...	Fulham	...
West Ham	...	Middlesbrough	...
Blackburn	...	Ipswich	...
Chelsea	...	Tottenham	...
Leeds	...	Charlton	...
Leicester	...	Derby	...
Liverpool	...	Everton	...
Man Utd	...	Aston Villa	...
Southampton	...	Bolton	...
Sunderland	...	Newcastle	...

Saturday, March 02, 2002

Aston Villa	...	West Ham	...
Tottenham	...	Sunderland	...
Bolton	...	Blackburn	...
Charlton	...	Chelsea	...
Derby	...	Man Utd	...
Everton	...	Leeds	...
Fulham	...	Liverpool	...
Ipswich	...	Southampton	...
Middlesbrough	...	Leicester	...
Newcastle	...	Arsenal	...

Tuesday, March 05, 2002

Arsenal	...	Derby	...
Leeds	...	Ipswich	...
Sunderland	...	Bolton	...

Wednesday, March 06, 2002

Blackburn	...	Aston Villa	...
Chelsea	...	Fulham	...
Leicester	...	Charlton	...
Liverpool	...	Newcastle	...
Man Utd	...	Tottenham	...
Southampton	...	Middlesbrough	...
West Ham	...	Everton	...

Saturday, March 16, 2002

Aston Villa	...	Arsenal	...
West Ham	...	Man Utd	...
Bolton	...	Derby	...
Chelsea	...	Sunderland	...
Everton	...	Fulham	...
Leeds	...	Blackburn	...
Middlesbrough	...	Liverpool	...
Newcastle	...	Ipswich	...
Southampton	...	Leicester	...
Tottenham	...	Charlton	...

Saturday, March 23, 2002

Arsenal	...	West Ham	...
Sunderland	...	Southampton	...
Blackburn	...	Newcastle	...
Charlton	...	Bolton	...
Derby	...	Everton	...
Fulham	...	Tottenham	...
Ipswich	...	Aston Villa	...
Leicester	...	Leeds	...
Liverpool	...	Chelsea	...
Man Utd	...	Middlesbrough	...

Saturday, March 30, 2002

Arsenal	...	Sunderland	...
West Ham	...	Ipswich	...
Bolton	...	Aston Villa	...
Chelsea	...	Derby	...
Leeds	...	Man Utd	...
Leicester	...	Blackburn	...
Liverpool	...	Charlton	...
M'brough	...	Tottenham	...
Newcastle	...	Everton	...
Southampton	...	Fulham	...

Monday, April 01, 2002

Tottenham	...	Leeds	...
Blackburn	...	Southampton	...
Charlton	...	Arsenal	...
Derby	...	Middlesbrough	...
Everton	...	Bolton	...
Fulham	...	West Ham	...
Ipswich	...	Chelsea	...
Man Utd	...	Liverpool	...
Sunderland	...	Leicester	...

Saturday, April 06, 2002

Arsenal	...	Tottenham	...
West Ham	...	Charlton	...
Bolton	...	Ipswich	...
Chelsea	...	Everton	...
Leeds	...	Sunderland	...
Leicester	...	Man Utd	...
Middlesbrough	...	Aston Villa	...
Newcastle	...	Fulham	...
Southampton	...	Derby	...

Saturday, April 13, 2002

Aston Villa	...	Leeds	...
Tottenham	...	West Ham	...
Blackburn	...	Chelsea	...
Charlton	...	Southampton	...
Derby	...	Newcastle	...
Everton	...	Leicester	...
Fulham	...	Bolton	...
Ipswich	...	Middlesbrough	...
Man Utd	...	Arsenal	...
Sunderland	...	Liverpool	...

Saturday, April 20, 2002

Arsenal	...	Ipswich	...
West Ham	...	Sunderland	...
Bolton	...	Tottenham	...
Chelsea	...	Man Utd	...
Leeds	...	Fulham	...
Leicester	...	Aston Villa	...
Liverpool	...	Derby	...
Middlesbrough	...	Blackburn	...
Newcastle	...	Charlton	...
Southampton	...	Everton	...

Saturday, April 27, 2002

Aston Villa	...	Southampton	...
Tottenham	...	Liverpool	...
Bolton	...	Arsenal	...
Charlton	...	Sunderland	...
Derby	...	Leeds	...
Everton	...	Blackburn	...
Fulham	...	Leicester	...
Ipswich	...	Man Utd	...
Middlesbrough	...	Chelsea	...
Newcastle	...	West Ham	...

Steve McClaren (left) and Gareth Southgate: New coach and player at Middlesbrough.

Saturday, May 11, 2002

Arsenal	...	Everton	...
West Ham	...	Bolton	...
Blackburn	...	Fulham	...
Chelsea	...	Aston Villa	...
Leeds	...	Middlesbrough	...
Leicester	...	Tottenham	...
Liverpool	...	Ipswich	...
Man Utd	...	Charlton	...
Southampton	...	Newcastle	...
Sunderland	...	Derby	...

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ABSW FORECASTS ... ABSW FORECASTS ... ABSW FORECASTS ... ABSW FORECASTS

ARVIND HICKMAN, Staff Writer with ABSW takes a look at all the comings and goings in his two part preview of the eagerly-awaited 2001-02 English Premier League season.

Well it's that time of the year again when grounds keepers around England are buzzing mad, sowing the final seeds of what promises to be the closest Premiership season in recent years.

The English summer has seen some big movers and even bigger-spenders with the usual top sides breaking a few records along the way.

Realistically, I believe any one of four teams can win the Premiership title this season but yet again Manchester United will be the team to beat.

It will be Sir Alex Ferguson's final season at the helm of United, ending an amazing era of seven Premiership titles and a Champions League in only nine seasons.

However, whether Fergie gets the send-off he despeartely desires is to be seen as Arsenal, Liverpool and Leeds United will be hot on his heels, with each of them vying to become the next English superpower.

This week I'll take a look at the three newcomers to the Premier League as well as traditional London powers Arsenal and Chelsea in part one of this preview.

ARSENAL

Position in 2000/01: 2nd

Transfers: In- Richard Wright (Ipswich Town), Sol Campbell (Tottenham Hotspur), Giovanni van Bronkhorst (Rangers), Francis Jeffers (Everton) Junichi Inamoto (Grampus 8, Japan).

Out- Stefan Malz (Kaiserslautern), Nelson Vivas (Internazionale), John Lukic (out of contract), Christopher Wreh (out of contract).

Arsene Wenger has spent big this summer (around $45 million) in a bid to reclaim his first Premiership title since the double winning season of 1997/98.

The introduction of experienced England defender Sol Campbell and goalkeeper Richard Wright will certainly add some steel to Arsenal's aging defence.

One of the Gunners biggest problems last season was an over-reliance on prolific French striker Thierry Henry. Wenger has brought in Francis Jeffers, a goal poacher at heart, to take some of this goal scoring responsibility. Perhaps the most important factor will be influential midfielder Patrick Vieira now staying on for another season at Highbury.

Expect the Gunners to be challenging for line honours at the business end of this season.

Players to watch: Sol Campbell, Thierry Henry, Robert Pires and Patrick Vieira

(Continued on page 21)

Victorian Premier League

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FINALS SERIES

Bulleen scrapes past Phoenix

By Bert van Bedaf

The Bulleen Zebras just scraped past a gutsy Altona East, 1-0, to book themselves a rematch with Heidelberg United in the preliminary final on Sunday, 3pm, at Olympic Village.

Last Sunday week, the Zebras let slip a one-goal advantage in the dying seconds against the Bergers and lost the penalty shoot-out, this week they snatched the lead after 90 seconds and hung on without impressing their supporters.

Brian MacNicol, the Queenslander who made his mark with Brunswick United Juventus more than a decade ago and has returned to the old stripes to the Veneto club, tapped home a free-kick after Phoenix 'keeper Jamie Cooper spilled the ball in front of the former Eastern Pride forward.

A former Bulleen and Port Melbourne 'keeper, Cooper saw the Sava Rusmir missile coming from wide on the right near the goal-line towards the far post.

But the Phoenix guardsman dropped his bundle right in front of MacNicol, who tapped it into the net. The Bulleen forward now may do it once against against his former club Heidelberg, when the Bergers were still in the NSL.

Bulleen missed Danny Gnjidic, who injured his hamstring last week taking his penalty against Heidelberg. The striker may miss Sunday's match against Heidelberg, for whom he also played in the NSL.

Together with former Socceroo Warren Spink and former Juventus defender Paul Della Rocca, the Zebras possess one of the most experienced sides in the league that, but it didn't show last Sunday.

MacNicol was Bulleen's man of the match. He not only scored the winning goal, he also laid off several good chances in a hard-working performance.

The Phoenix were stiff not to notch up a goal, force extra time and perhaps even skip past the Zebras on penalties, as they did against Bentleigh last Sunday week.

Peter Groidis, Nick Papadopoulos and Paul Donnelly had shots on goal in the first half, but Zebras 'keeper Michael Theoklitos stood his ground.

After the break Terry Antoniadis and John Dimitrelos threatened before the Phoenix created three supurb chances to level in the last eight minutes.

A minute from time, Dimitrelos headed wide from point blank range from a Antoniadis cross and on 90 minutes, Jani Juric put his shot just wide.

After the surprise goal, Bulleen registered no more attempts until the 74th minute, when MacNicol laid the ball in Will Hastie's path and the mid-fielder shot wide. Berkan Sakaci put a right-footer wide and Hastie should have made sure of the win a minute into time-on, when he drove another MacNicol pass into Cooper's saving feet.

Phoenix coach Chris Taylor, who reached finals football for the third time, having done so twice before with Green Gully, felt the goal had come from an off-side position and from a soft free-kick, but otherwise commented it had been a pretty season for his side.

"It wasn't a free-kick, but sometimes referee (Senko Rastocic) decisions cost you the game. I thought the free-kick was very soft. That led to the goal and cost us the whole season," Taylor said.

Looking back on the season, Taylor said his side had done well, finishing fourth and making the finals.

"I think, we can be proud of what we did with the team we've got and the money we're paid compared with some of the superstars that play at these other clubs. We can hold our heads up," he said.

"We missed Daniel Genovese, Steve Bartol and Robert Troise all season.

Our goal 'keeper Sam Frangos went on trial overseas. But the boys who've come in have done well. We were delighted to have come this far and anything further would have been a bonus for us," Taylor said.

Taylor said he expected to stay at Altona East Phoenix next season. "I believe so. I've enjoyed it here. It's a very good club and the people have been very good to me. The club's in good shape and we can improve with a couple of players. The thing is we have a good team spirit. That's what has carried us through and we wouldn't want to disturb that," he said.

But on Sunday's performance, the Zebras will be struggling against the physical Bergers.

"We gave Altona too much space in midfield, especially in the first half and it caused us problems," Mullen said.

"Our goal keeper had a very good game. He's been strong all year and I believe he's one of the best young 'keepers I've seen for a long time. But we lost Della Rocca.

Mullen brought on Ryan Ollerton, whose famous 1974 Socceroos dad, Peter Ollerton, coaches Heidelberg. "I put young Ryan on the right and sent

Young Ryan gave Mullen a few tips when the Zebras played the Bergers during the season and a fortnight ago. He might well be doing that again for Sunday's vital rematch.

Sharks in Grand Final Frenzy

By Bill Brickell

Port Melbourne Sharks booked their passage to the Grand Final with an emphatic 4-1 semi-final win over a Heidelberg United side that had its chances, but was blown away by a second-half Sharks blitz.

But the first 30 minutes belonged to the Bergers and only some poor finishing kept the scoresheet bare. A cross by Alfonso Opazo was punched downward by Port 'keeper Steve Wardle, but the loose ball was fired wide by Nick Lazarevski. Nick Schwal was the springboard for many Heidelberg moves but Port's Mitch Pino put George Tzirtis through the middle only for his shot to be blocked.

Heidelberg's height advantage was troubling the Port defence and Eric Vassiliadis was controlling the back for Heidelberg. Sean Cunningham had a tight rein on Port's goal-ace Peter Psarros. A high cross to Opazo saw that player climbing above the taller John Paul Knezevic to win the ball, but Opazo's drive found the side netting.

Moments later, poor defence by Sharks' tall defender Raheem Mousawy surrendered the ball to George Georgiadis who ran at the threadbare defence and slipped the ball to the right where Opazo and Lazarevski lurked, but the pass was overplayed and went harmlessly behind.

A free kick from the right fell to Opazo who set up Cameron Brown whose drive was brilliantly tipped over by Wardle.

The Sharks were taking their goal kicks short, and getting into trouble with a pressing Burgers attack. Lazarevski stormed down the left but his shot flew over the bar.

The Port defence was in tatters, but Heidelberg was destined to rue the missed opportunities.

On the half-hour Brown limped off with an ankle injury. It was to be the turning point of the match as the momentum suddenly swung to the Sharks.

Tzirtis beat the off-side trap to go one-on-one with Jim Kourtis but the Heidelberg 'keeper was quick off his line to force Tzirtis wide.

The diminutive right winger had the better of Heidelberg's Damian Vojtek and was Port's main avenue of attack.

Referee Nestor Zacharidis was allowing the game to flow, and the big crowd was enjoying the fast, open football.

Port was pressing forward now, and had a strong penalty appeal turned down, then Tass Psonis blasted over. Sharks right back Knezevic, left unmarked by Opazo, was menacing on the right.

The second half started as the first had ended, with Port in control of mid-field and threatening on the attack. A 50-metre, unchallenged run by Sam Poutakidis resulted in a blast over the bar from the edge of the area.

Peter Kakos was on for Bill Zarogiannis and he rejuvenated the Heidelberg attack. Brown blasted at 'keeper Wardle and then skied the rebound over.

The opening goal came seven minutes after the interval. A short corner played back to Tzirtis was floated, over the stranded Kourtis, to the far post where an unchallenged Knezevic ghosted in to head into the top left corner.

It was all Port now, with lightning raids on a struggling defence. First Psarros chipped over both 'keeper and crossbar then, set free down the left, his cross found Nick Tsaltas unmarked on the edge of the box but Tsaltas' shot was timid and the chance evaporated.

Port's second came on 61 minutes when Psonis gathered in centre-field and ran at the middle of the defence before slipping it to Tzirtis on the left. He made no mistake from 15 metres.

From the restart Heidelberg's Kakos gathered on the edge of the area and his drive was tipped over. From the resultant corner Mile Medjedovic had a chance only to shoot high.

But Heidelberg's renaissance was short-lived. On 68 minutes Poutakidis gathered in the area and shot fiercely only to see Kourtis block at point blank range. Psarros pounced on the loose ball to slot it under the still-recovering 'Burgers custodian.

At 3-0 the game appeared to be over, but Heidelberg kept fighting and pulled a goal back a minute later when Opazo's drive was blocked by Medjedovic.

The ball fell to Kakos inside the area and the tall Heidelberg substitute slammed it past the exposed Wardle.

Port kept up the pressure with Poutakidis forcing a point blank save by Kourtis and Psonis shooting wide. With a minute to go, evergreen Peter Tsolakis came on and he was to have the final word when Poutakidis was fouled by the diving Kourtis and Tsolakis slammed home the resultant penalty for Port's fourth goal in a barn-storming second half.

ZEBRAS LOOK FORWARD TO REMATCH

By Bert van Bedaf

Bulleen gets a second chance to knock-off Heidelberg, who came back from the dead a fortnight ago to win on penalties but were trounced 4-1 by Port Melbourne last Sunday.

With Port Melbourne having booked a straight passage into the grand final at Bob Jane Stadium on August 12, it's up to the Zebras and the Bergers to step up and decide on the side to challenge the minor premier.

For next week's loser, the season will be finished. The winner will be up against a refreshed Sharks team.

"What a lovely game to look forward to after what happened the previous week," Bulleen coach Joe Mullen said about Sunday's preliminary final.

"Finals' football is all about concentration and focus. They don't go for just 90 minutes, they are 90 to 100 minute games," he said

There are no soft options for Bulleen to win the premier league championship. The Zebras will have to get past the tough Bergers and the high-scoring Sharks.

"Both sides are good. Port Melbourne are quick in coming forward and Heidelberg has the best defence in the league. They are very hard to break down. But we'll work on a few things and see what we can come up with," Mullen said.

"Port has gone straight into the grand final and deservedly so. It's been the team of the year. This game next week will gives us the chance to come up and see how we're going to stand up against the benchmark," he said.

Striker Danny Gnjidic has a 50/50 chance of playing, if his injured hamstring improves. "Danny feels confident he's a proposition for next week, but well see how he comes up and we'll assess his situation during the week," Mullen said.

Altona East coach Chris Taylor believes the Zebras and Sharks will play off in the grand final.

"Port Melbourne will meet Bulleen in the finals. I did tip Bulleen to win the title at the start, but Port Melbourne have their confidence up and have another week's break," Taylor said.

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE FINALS RESULTS

Sunday, July 29:

MAJOR SEMI-FINAL

Port Melbourne 4 (Knezevic, Tzirtis, Psarros, Tsolakis) v **Heidelberg 1** (Kakos)

**Port Melbourne goes through to grand final*
**Heidelberg plays in preliminary final*

MINOR SEMI-FINAL

Bulleen 1 (MacNicol) - **Altona East 0**

Bulleen progresses to preliminary final
Altona East has been eliminated from the finals

Victorian Premier League

FINALS SERIES

PRELIMINARY FINAL
HEIDELBERG UNITED V VS BULLEEN ZEBRAS
Olympic Park, Heidelberg Heights
Sunday, 5th August, 2001 - 3pm Kick-Off
* The winner will advance to the Grand Final to take on Port Melbourne Sharks. The loser will be eliminated from the finals.

GRAND FINAL
Sunday, August 12:
Bob Jane Stadium, South Melbourne
Kick-off - 3pm.
Grand final brunch, August 12
Grand Waldorf Ballroom, Carlton Crest Hotel
65 Queens Rd, Melbourne
10am - 12.30pm Ticket at $65 each.
For bookings contact 5221 0709.

For more information, log onto
www.soccervictoria.org.au

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Phone: (07) 3252 5327 ● Fax: (07) 3252 1137 ● www.qldsoccer.com.au

PREMIER LEAGUE WRAP-UPS

By Glenn Davis

By Glenn Davis

Wynnum coach Peter Tokesi refused to rate the Wolves favourites to win the Queensland premier league championship despite a comprehensive win over Bundaberg and a surprise draw from title rivals Brisbane City last weekend.

Wynnum, who were knocked out of the Queensland Cup semi-finals by Brisbane Lions last week, recovered to maintain their slender premiership lead by downing Bundaberg 3-1 away on Saturday night.

Tokesi then was a keen onlooker as he made the long road trip back from Bundaberg to watch a gallant Rochedale hold on for an upset 1-1 draw against Brisbane City on Sunday.

Brisbane City's costly draw meant Wynnum would still hold down first place on goal differences if Brisbane City wins its now crucial game in hand against Bundaberg.

Tokesi was downcast after watching Wynnum put in a below par performance in the Queensland Cup semi-final and missing a return showdown with Brisbane City in the Cup final at Perry Park on Saturday week.

Former Brisbane Strikers' forward Des Hughes played a starring role in the Queensland Cup semi-final leading Lions to a 3-2 win over Wynnum.

Hughes scored one goal and set up another which prompted Lions' coach John Sime to suggest Hughes was a more matured player now and ready for a second chance at national league level with Brisbane Strikers.

Des Hughes: Inspired Brisbane Lions to victory

Brisbane Lions led 2-0 at the break after goals from Cody Lovell and Reece Tollenaere before Wynnum pulled one back in the 65th minute when Brad Ditton rounded the keeper after a Lions defensive mistake.

Although Wynnum pressured, Lions went to a 3-1 lead before the Wolves hit back to 3-2 late in the game through Mark Alaru.

Tokesi blamed a lack of cohesion for the semi-final defeat with Wynnum starting without three key players in Luke Adair, Brendan Rodgers and Paul De Vries.

With the Queensland Cup defeat still on their minds, Wynnum bounced back three days later to trounce Bundaberg in the premier league despite a scoreless first half.

"We missed six one-on-ones with the keeper in the first half and a penalty as well," Tokesi said.

"The second half was a much better performance but overall I still think Brisbane City remain favourites for the title despite their 1-1 draw with Rochedale.

"Brisbane City have an easy run home against Mt Gravatt, Taringa and Easts although it won't be easy against two of them who are battling relegation.

"We've still go to play Gold Coast, Toowoomba and Ipswich and none of those will be easy games particularly the Gold Coast and Ipswich."

Wynnum had to wait until the 60th minute to break the deadlock against Bundaberg when Scott Rocker finished off a movement down the left flank from Josh Rose.

Rose then put his side up 2-0 when he raced onto a pass by Brad Ditton 15 minute later before Scott McLean lobbed Bundaberg keeper Michael Bainbridge three minutes later to put the final nail in Bundaberg's coffin.

Bundaberg, who are in serious danger of relegation, scored late through Jason Keune.

At Spencer Park, Brisbane City came from behind to snatch a vital point against Rochedale after a Danny Flaskas volley from 18 metres gave Rochedale a surprise 1-0 lead at halftime.

Brisbane City, however, fought back tenaciously after the break to equalise when Vedran Becirbegovic finished off a left sided movement by Barry Wilkinson.

City coach Danny Wright believed several forced changes to his regular starting line-up was partly to blame for his side's inept first half performance.

"We were a shambles in the first half, probably because we lacked cohesion after having a few guys out and a few out of position," Wright said.

"We didn't play with any confidence and we deserved to be a goal down at the break as Rochedale showed the spirit that were lacking.

"But to our credit we turned it around in the second half and Rochedale did well in the end to hold us and get a point after we applied sustained pressure."

Wright believes the draw has put added pressure on Brisbane City for the championship run home.

"It's a critical time for us right now," he said.

"If we don't start taking our chances and score after all the possession we get in games then we don't deserve to win the title.We're a brilliant team building up but once we get in front of goals we fall down."

In others matches, relegation candidates Mt Gravatt picked up a valuable point in a 1-1 draw with the Gold Coast while Taringa Rovers downed Easts 4-3 in a thriller at Heath Park.

Taringa led 4-0 at halftime after a double from Steve Dawe and one each from Lawrence Drake and Craig Collins before Easts, under new coach Col Bennett, staged a remarkable second half comeback to net three times through Shane Coffey, Mike Cattermole and Paul Foster.

At Lions Stadium, Pine Rivers remained anchored on the bottom of the table going down 4-1 to Brisbane Lions while top six contenders Ipswich Knights could only manage a 1-1 draw with Toowoomba.

Vedran Becirbegovic: On target for Brisbane City.

ALL THE RESULTS

ROUND 19

XXXX LEAGUE

Mt Gravatt	1	Gold Coast City	1
T'wmba Raiders	1	IPSW Knights	1
B'berg Waves	1	Wynnum	3
Brisbane Lions	4	Pine Rivers	1
Brisbane City	1	Rochedale Rovers	1
Eastern Suburbs	3	Taringa Rovers	4

TOP GOALSCORERS

Name	Goals	Club
PORIC Adem	16	Gold Coast
ROCHE Anthony	12	Wynnum
CAMERON Allen	10	Brisbane City
TOLLENAERE Reece	10	Brisbane Lions
HILLIM Matty	10	IPSW Knights
ROCKER Scott	10	Wynnum
ROSE Joshua	10	Wynnum
HUGHES Des	9	Brisbane Lions
KING Andrew	8	Brisbane City
COFFEY Shane	8	Easts

LEAGUE TABLE

	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts
Wynnum	**19**	**12**	**6**	**1**	**50**	**18**	**42**
Brisbane City	18	11	6	1	39	14	39
Gold Coast City	19	10	6	3	38	21	36
Brisbane Lions	19	9	7	3	41	26	34
IPSW Knights	19	8	7	4	32	20	31
Rochedale Rovers	19	9	4	6	34	27	31
Taringa Rovers	19	7	4	8	23	27	25
T'wmba Raiders	19	4	5	10	20	33	17
Eastern Suburbs	19	4	4	11	27	50	16
Bundaberg Waves	18	4	2	12	24	36	14
Mt Gravatt	19	4	2	13	26	53	14
Pine Rivers	19	3	3	13	24	54	12

PREMIER FOOTBALL

QUEENSLAND PREMIER LEAGUE

FIXTURES (ROUND 20)

Saturday 4th August

Rochedale Rovers v Brisbane Lions	7.00pm
Wynnum v TBA Raiders	7.00pm
Pine Rivrers v B'berg Waves	7.00pm

Sunday 5th August

Taringa Rovers v Brisbane City	2.45pm
IPSW Knights v Gold Coast	2.45pm
Eastern Suburbs v MT Gravatt	3.00pm

NSW Youth League Results

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE

GRADE 13: Newcastle United 2 Fairfield Bulls 0.

GRADE 14: Eastern Suburbs Wanderers vs Wollongong Wolves W/O, Sydney United 3 Leichhardt Tigers 0, Marconi Stallions vs Newcastle United W/O, Canterbury Marrickville vs Parramatta Eagles W/O, Sutherland Shire vs Manly Warringah Dolphins W/O, St George vs Sydney Olympic W/O, Northern Spirit 2 Macarthur Rams 0, Bankstown City Cubs vs Penrith Panthers W/O, Blacktown City Demons vs Central Coast Coasties W/O, Fairfield Bulls vs Bonnyrigg White Eagles W/O. Newcastle United 4 Fairfield Bulls 1.

GRADE 15: Eastern Suburbs Wanderers vs Wollongong Wolves W/O, Sydney United 2 Leichhardt Tigers 2, Marconi Stallions vs Newcastle United W/O, Canterbury Marrickville vs Parramatta Eagles W/O, Sutherland Shire vs Manly Warringah Dolphins W/O, St George vs Sydney Olympic W/O, Northern Spirit 2 Macarthur Rams 0, Bankstown City Cubs vs Penrith Panthers W/O, Blacktown City Demons vs Central Coast Coasties W/O, Fairfield Bulls vs Bonnyrigg White Eagles W/O, Newcastle United 1 Fairfield Bulls 2.

GRADE 17: Canterbury Marrickville 0 Blacktown City Demons 7, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers vs Wollongong Wolves W/O, Sydney United 1 Leichhardt Tigers 1, Marconi Stallions vs Newcastle United W/O, Canterbury Marrickville vs Parramatta Eagles W/O, Sutherland Shire vs Manly Warringah Dolphins W/O, St George vs Sydney Olympic W/O, Northern Spirit 5 Macarthur Rams 0, Bankstown City Cubs vs Penrith Panthers W/O, Blacktown City Demons vs Central Coast Coasties W/O, Fairfield Bulls vs Bonnyrigg White Eagles W/O, Newcastle United 1 Fairfield Bulls 0, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers vs Wollongong Wolves W/O, Sydney United 1 Leichhardt Tigers 2, Marconi Stallions vs Newcastle United W/O, Canterbury Marrickville vs Parramatta Eagles W/O, Sutherland Shire vs Manly Warringah Dolphins W/O, St George vs Sydney Olympic W/O, Northern Spirit 6 Macarthur Rams 0, Bankstown City Cubs vs Penrith Panthers W/O, Blacktown City Demons vs Central Coast Coasties W/O,Fairfield Bulls vs Bonnyrigg White Eagles W/O.

GRADE 18: Hurstville City Minotaurs vs Bankstown City Minotaurs(Washed Out), Stanmore Hawks vs Fairfield Bulls Washed Out, Hajduk Wanderers1 Dulwich Hill 4, AC United 9 Rockdale City Suns 0, Manly Warringah Dolphins vs Macarthur Rams (Washed Out), Fraser Park Jets vs MSC Liverpool (Washed Out).

SUPER CADET LEAGUE

GRADE 11: Sutherland Shire vs Manly Warringah Dolphins W/O, St George vs Sydney Olympic W/O, Northern Spirit 0 Macarthur Rams 0, Bankstown City Cubs vs Penrith Panthers W/O, Blacktown City Demons vs Central Coast Coasties W/O, Fairfield Bulls vs Bonnyrigg White Eagles W/O.

GRADE 12: Sydney Olympic 2 Fairfield Bulls 0, Sutherland Shire vs Manly Warringah Dolphins W/O, St George vs Sydney Olympic W/O, Northern Spirit 3 Macarthur Rams 1, Blacktown City Demons vs Central Coast Coasties W/O, Fairfield Bulls vs Bonnyrigg White Eagles W/O. Canterbury Marrickville v's Parramatta Eagles (Washed Out) Eastern Suburbs Wanderers v's Wollongong Wolves (Washed Out), Sydney United 5 Leichhardt Tigers 2, Canterbury Marrickville v Parramatta Eagles (Washed Out), Eastern Suburbs Wanderers v Wollongong Wolves (Washed Out), Sydney United 1 Leichhardt Tigers 1.

WOLLONGONG NEWS

By Otto Bader

Promotion Drive — Wolves Marketing Manager Greg Burgess — never tiring drumming up support to win over local fans and business — announced that as from Wednesday August 1st, season tickets are available.

Please contact Susan Chiarello at the Wolves office on 42263988 to reserve your seat. Tickets price per season is $260,- with a special bonus offer for additional five general admission tickets free to be used for your convenience to give complementary tickets to your friends or acquaintances.

Also now available are corporate packages for VIP boxes, special seat-arrangements, advertising fixed or movable signs around the ground. For details contact Susan at the club's office.

Past @ Present Champions — coming together on Friday August 17th at the Fraternity club — soccers major sponsor —12.30pm for a special lunch arranged with prominent guest speakers like Steve Blocker Roach former Rugby League Champion, Mark Edmondson former Australian Open Tennis Champion, Adrian Noddy Alston past Socceroo International who played in the 1974 World Cup in Germany.

Also present will be players from Basketball National Champions the Wollongong Hawks plus the Illawarra St. George Dragons from the National Rugby League competition.

Don't miss this event, contact Susan at the Wolves for tickets, cost $60.- each including meal and drinks.

ICU Premier League Soccer — round 16 with results and reviews: three home wins, one away win, two draws, total of 20 goals scored, no positional changes in top places, minor shift of places in the middle of the table, two points the difference between first an second, third seven points adrift from top, with six rounds to play the top end six teams are all in with a chance to claim a play off spot.

WOLLONGONG OLYMPIC 1 CRINGILA 1 — on Saturday night game both shared the points, the host taking the lead with Leighal Dellis and Tony Sekuloski equalising within minutes. Visiting coach Rade Stefanovski expecting a win considering opportunities not converted, now facing a tough next match against second placed Port where Olympic is expected to do well in the next round.

Joe Cachia: Wollongong Wolves amiable chairman.

CONISTON 1 PORT KEMBLA 3 — on Sunday a large crowd watched a fluent Port taking control after a short tight opening period with striker Nick Polimenakos scoring twice after defender Ian Polari scored the opener, the home team scored a late goal with substitute John Simonovski.

Not that the host did not have opportunities earlier but were unable to break through with the visitors dominating play more and more, never looking in danger, their coach Noddy Alston satisfied with the performance. Recent Port signing Ned Aleksic impressed, preparing the spadework for the three goals scored.

Coniston dropped one spot, now in third place, Port are second facing a hard opponent next, Coniston should take the points in their next game.

SHOALHAVEN 2 BALGOWNIE 5 —placed 11th the home team met seventh positioned visitors, always struggling to stem attacks, at the break they were 0:2 down, conceding three more in the second half, goals for the visitors Frank Barila and his name sake cousin (3) plus Paul Sartor and Victor Costabile, for the host player-coach Mark Smith scored twice.

KEMBLAWARRA 2 BULLI 1 — two evenly matched teams, one the competition leaders, the other in 10th place and competing well, scoring chances were created by both sides and missed, the visitors opened the scoring with Josh Bulgin, having a dominant first half.

The home team defended doggedly, battled on, scoring the equaliser in the second half with a solo-effort by John Flack, and followed up with the winning goal from a great header by Richard Lloyd late in the game in extra time.

Bulli had two openings but failed to convert, they deserved a point for their effort. For the host the win keeps them in top spot. Both face difficult opponents next, needing to stay alert with total commitment.

LYSAGHT 0 PICTON RANGERS 1 —an upset, very important win for ninth placed Picton, playing eighth placed, the golden goal scored by Colin Luff late in the game, visiting coach Greg Goodfellow claiming his lads deserved to win, having hit the wood-work three times with their keeper David Hayes outstanding. While the home team regretted missed opportunities, now facing stiff opposition next as are Picton at home to one of the top teams.

WESTERN SUBURBS 3 NORTHERN UNITED 0 — the 4th placed played last, expected to win more handsomely, not expecting too much opposition, goals coming from Paul Robbard, Matthew Bailey, with North deflecting the ball into their own net for the third goal, nothing going well for the struggling visitors finding it tough to collect points in the next encounter, while West are hoping to do well next away.

Points Table = KEMBLAWARRA 38, PORT 36, CONSITON 31, WEST 28, CRINGILA 26, OLYMPIC 24, BALGOWNIE 23, LYSAGHT 21, PICTON 19, BULLI 16, SHOALHAVEN 10, NORTH 1.

In Reserve Grade Port is on 38 points, clearly in front. In Youth Grade Lysaght on 39 points, seven ahead.

ICU First Division — results and reviews: four home wins, three away wins, one draw, total goals scored 218, no great upheavals, the leading teams consolidating positions, one late change of coach replacement, front runners are Warilla on 36 points, Kiama 35, Tarrawanna 33, Albion Park WE 28, Bellambi-Helensburgh-South coast United all on 26 points with University one point behind.

In Reserve Grade Tarrawanna on 40 points, nine ahead. In Youth Grade University 36, just three points in front. Only three more rounds to play.

BELLAMBI 1 SOUTH COAST UNITED 3 — fifthth played seventh, not quiet the outcome forecast, a late challenge by the visitors see them moving up the ladder, possible to collect more points in the remaining games.

HELENSBURGH 2 WARILLA 3 — sixth placed host played the competition leaders who did not look in danger and led in the second half 3:1 before allowing a late goal, Warilla face a challenge from the third placed team next, could be an interesting run for the title.

UNIVERSITY 5 SHELLHARBOUR CITY 0 — eighth played 14th and dominated play, nothing really at stake anymore for both, perhaps the students could move up a couple of places for the play-offs.

WOONONA 1 BERKELEY 1 — 10th faced 13th, two teams placed in the middle of the table, nothing more to play for then pride, could pick up few more points to shift up if either win next matches.

DAPTO 1 FERNHILL 2 — 11th played 12th, everybodys game to take, the visitors determined to gain a better place, possible in the next rounds.

TARAWANNA 5 BARBARIANS 0 — third faced 15th, close in the first half until the visitors lost two players being send-off, unable to hold off any more goals, the host in with a chance to grab top spot in a late run home, the Barbarians able to improve with more team discipline.

ALBION PARK WE 2 HIGHLANDS 0 — fourth played 9th, important win for the home team to stay close to the front-runners, new coach Phil Matias started with a win and a relatively easy run home able to challenge for a top spot, the visitors also can move up a place with a win.

RUSE 2 ILLAWARRA 0 — 16th faced 17th, a confidence lift for the home team, nothing to play for than pride, looking forward to end the season, not successful for both sides.

Junior Soccer — Shellharbours U/13 won 5:0 against Warilla at home, goals from Andrew Tersiovskiv (3) and Daniel, leading now the First Division. Crunch match coming up against 2nd placed Oak Flats, just three points adrift.

Junior soccer competition points tables — round 11 leading teams are:

U/10 GRADINGS UNANDERRA, COLEDALE, WOLLONGONG, WOONONA, DAPTO.

U/11S 1ST DIVISION TO 5TH OAK FLATS, WOLLONGONG, HELENSBURGH, BERKELEY, DAPTO.

U/12S 1ST TO 5TH ALBION PARK, OAK FLATS, KIAMA, ALBION PARK, BALGOWNIE.

U/13S 1ST TO 3RD SHELLHARBOUR, PORT KEMBLA, TARRAWANNA.

U/14S 1ST TO 3RD UNANDERRA, WOONONA, ALBION PARK.

U/15S 1ST TO 2ND OAK FLATS, WARILLA.

U/16S 1ST TO 2ND UNANDERRA, BULLI.

U/18S 1ST DIVISION OAK FLATS.

Girls Soccer Tables — U/12S HELENSBURGH, U/14S WOONONA, U/16S OAK FLATS, U/18S THIRROUL.

Referee Quiz = opposing players are both hurt in a head clash, accidentally, bleeding from cuts. What should be done?

(*Answer:* Stop the game immediately, have the players treated, taken off or replaced, if seriously injured, restart with a drop ball where the game was stopped)

Winter Super League

VALENTINE SPORTS PARK

235-257 Meurants Lane, Glenwood 2768 ● Phone (02) 9629 1800

ROUND 20

Rampant Steve crush Wanderers

Kresimir Marusic: Scored the important match-winner for Rockdale City Suns.

Dulwich Hill 3
Hajduk Wanderers 0

Wonder boy Steve Karavatakis was in a zone on Sunday afternoon, scoring a double whammy in no fewer than five minutes and setting up one other to give his team, Dulwich Hill, a much-needed 3-0 victory over home side Hajduk Wanderers.

In a game, which presented plenty of early opportunities for both sides, it was Dulwich Hill who eventually managed to take control of the game when Karavatakis crossed to Ben Deighan who made no mistake in sending home the missile from close range in the 50th minute.

Karavatakis then stitched things up for his side when he delivered two goals with pin-point accuracy in the 84th and 89th minutes, leaving no one in doubt who the king pin in the goalscoring department is this season. Karavatakis' two-goal haul brings his tally to 18 and puts him at the head of the top goalscorer list.

AC United 0
Rockdale Suns 1

In a crucial match of the round encounter the Rockdale City Suns were victorious over AC United at Abruzzi Oval, thanks to a loan goal from classy midfielder Kresimir Marusic.

The former NSL star was able to lose his defender after a Leo Carle cross and beat the keeper with a precision shot to give the Suns full points and almost make sure of a Top Five spot.

The Suns have now conceded only 1 goal in 5 matches and have the defence of Richard Plesa, Dean Culina and Andrew McHardy plus 'keeper Amir Ajanovic to thank for their undefeated run.

The Suns will have a few teams worried as their star-studded team is now getting a roll on. AC United meanwhile have done remarkably to get this close and still have a mathematical chance if results go their way and either Rockdale City or Dulwich Hill fall.

Rain Affected Games

Hurstville City Minotaurs Vs Bankstown City Minotaurs:
(Washed Out)

Stanmore Hawks Vs Fairfield Bulls:
(Washed Out)

Manly Warringah Dolphins Vs Macarthur Rams:
(Washed Out)

Fraser Park Jets Vs MSC Liverpool:
(Washed Out)

WINTER SUPER LEAGUE LADDER

(AFTER ROUND 20)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bankstown City Lions	**19**	**12**	**4**	**3**	**35**	**13**	**40**
Fairfield Bulls	18	11	4	3	59	22	37
Dulwich Hill	19	11	3	5	35	20	36
Rockdale City Suns	20	11	3	6	38	32	36
Manly Warringah	19	11	2	6	44	25	35
AC United	20	9	4	7	28	25	31
Hiville City Minotaurs	19	7	4	8	19	28	25
Macarthur Rams	19	6	4	9	28	26	22
Stanmore Hawks	19	6	2	11	22	38	20
Hajduk Wanderers	20	5	4	11	28	44	19
Fraser Park	19	5	3	11	30	38	18
MSC Liverpool	19	1	3	15	18	73	6

For further information see: www.soccernsw.com.au

Winter Super League

www.soccernsw.com.au

ROUND 21

SATURDAY 4TH AUGUST

Fairfield Bulls v Hurstville City Minotaurs — Nineveh Field
First Grade: 3.00pm

SUNDAY 5TH AUGUST

Bankstown City lions v Fraser Park Jets — Jensen Park
First Grade: 3.00pm
Dulwich Hill v Stanmore Hawks — Arlington Oval
First Grade: 3.00pm
Rockdale City Suns v Hajduk Wanderers — Rockdale Ilinden SC
First Grade: 3.00pm
Macarthur Rams v AC United — Lynwood Park
First Grade: 3.00pm
M.S.C. Liverpool v Manly Warringah — Hammondville Oval
First Grade: 3.00pm

Rescheduled Game from Round 14

WEDNESDAY 1ST AUGUST

Dulwich Hill v Fairfield Bulls — Fraser Park
First Grade: 7.30pm

Catch up with all the latest news on the Winter Super League and other NSW Soccer news on our website:

www.soccernsw.com.au

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Copa America

Ill-disciplined Mexico hand Colombia victory

Colombia won the Copa America for the first time on Sunday, beating nine-man Mexico 1-0 in the final of a tournament devalued by the absence of Argentina and the top players of most other countries.

Defender Ivan Cordoba headed the winner in the 65th minute of a vicious, bad-tempered final in which Paraguayan referee Ubaldo Aquino, who never looked in control of the game, allowed punches, kicks and bad tackles to go unpunished.

Mexico had Juan Rodriguez sent off in the 80th minute for a tackle from behind on Jairo Castillo, and Gerardo Torrado dismissed in injury time.

Coach Javier Aguirre was also ordered from the touchline in the first half for repeatedly moving out of his technical area and the match finished amid furious protests from the Mexican team.

Colombia, in the final for the first time since 1975 when they lost to Peru, completed the competition with a 100 percent record and without conceding a goal in six games.

Mexico have taken part as guests since 1993 and it was the second time they have finished as runners-up.

The match, between two teams who are struggling to qualify for next year's World Cup, was briefly halted in the fifth minute when two late-arriving parachutists, who were taking part in the closing ceremony, landed on the pitch as play was in progress.

Aristizabal hit the post early on but the competition's leading scorer with six goals limped off in the 32nd minute with a pulled thigh muscle and was replaced by Jairo Castillo.

Mexico were missing veteran captain Alberto Garcia Aspe, who was suspended after being sent off in the semi-final win over Uruguay.

Colombia took a grip on the game early in the second half with Castillo and Geovanny Hernandez both coming close to giving them the lead.

Mexico's best effort was in the 64th minute with a powerful free kick by Ramon Morales which goalkeeper Oscar Cordoba did well to save.

Colomiba's winner came one minutes later when Cordoba rose to head in a free kick taken by Ivan Lopez.

Most times, including Colombia and Mexico, fielding experimental sides at the Copa, preferring to concentrate their efforts on qualifying for next year's World Cup.

Argentina did not take part at all because of the chaotic organisation of the tournament which went ahead at six day's notice after earlier being postponed to next year.

Colombian Ivan Ramiro Cordoba (left) heads the ball into the net off a free kick past Mexican Johan Rodriguez (right) scoring his team's winning goal in the final.

Honduran Saul Martinez (18) shoots past Uruguayan goalie Adrian Berbia (12) and Gonzalo Sorondo (3) to score his team's first goal during the match for third place at the Copa America.

HONDURAS UPSTAGE URUGUAY IN LOSERS' FINAL

Honduras claimed an unexpected third place at the Copa America on Sunday, beating 14-times champions Uruguay 5-4 on penalties after 90 minutes left the sides locked at 2-2.

Saul Martinez, Honduras' hero in their 2-0 quarter-final win over Brazil, scored the opener after 14 minutes at Bogota's El Campin stadium, which was packed with 46,000 people awaiting the final later Sunday between hosts Colombia and Mexico.

Joe Bizera levelled the scores on 21 minutes before a frenetic period just before the break saw Junior Izaguirre put Honduras back in front on 41 minutes and Andres Martinez equalise on the stroke of half-time.

The second half saw both sides cancel each other's efforts out as the match became increasingly scrappy and penalties had to determine which losing semi-finalist claimed the consolation prize of third place.

Reinaldo Pineda, Martinez, Ricky Garcia, Ninrod Medina and Izaguirre duly netted for Honduras but Carlos Gutierrez struck Uruguay's second kick too close to Honduran keeper Henry Enamorado.

The goalie, proved the vital stop as he conceded efforts from Gonzalo Sorondo, Julio Rodriguez, Rodrigo Lemos and Ruben Olivera.

Wild parties greet Nigeria's third straight World Cup ticket

Nigeria Sunday erupted into wild victory celebrations after the Super Eagles booked their ticket for next year's World Cup with the 3-0 defeat of arch-rivals Ghana.

The celebrations began right from when President Olusegun Obasanjo's surprise presence at the Liberation Stadium was announced and continued when top scorer Victor Agali headed home the opening goal as early as the first minute.

Tijjani Babangida's brace within the first half was the icing on the cake as Nigeria qualified for the third consecutive appearance at the World Cup.

The Eagles popped several bottles of Champagne on the pitch while a delighted President Obasanjo came down to congratulate the players individually as thousands of fans mobbed their heroes during their victory-lap around the tracks and right up to the team bus.

Fans proudly waved the Nigerian flag on fast moving bikes and cars, shouting slogans like 'Ghana must go', 'Up Nigeria' and 'Nigeria for World Cup'.

The beer palours flung open their doors as the victory parties went into the night.

"It's really great. We're going to party all night long", said two-goal hero Tijjani Babangida.

The victory ensured that Nigeria with 16 points from eight games booked Africa's fifth and final ticket for the soccer championship ahead of Group B rivals Liberia, who finished their campaign on 15 points.

"I'm happy our hard work has paid off at last," said Nigeria's coach Shaibu Amodu.

"All credit must go to the players. They have been wonderful. I only had to motivate them.

"We never really lost hope even when we lost some crucial games. We had always prayed for a miracle, which we're celebrating today."

The anxious crowd at the Liberation Stadium, which included President Olusegun Obasanjo, did not have to wait for too long to settle whatever fears they had about the outcome of the game when Victor Agali headed home in the very first minute.

Arsenal striker Nwankwo Kanu was brought down close to the Ghanaian box and Agali nodded home from the resultant free kick by Austin Okocha for his fourth goal in the qualifying series.

Two more goals by the pacy Babangida in the 20th and 43rd minutes wrapped up the Eagles ticket to the World Cup and set off wild celebrations across the entire country.

The match between these two rivals was not without incidence, though. Ghana's substitute goalkeeper Issac Boateng was sent off in stoppage time of the first half for a professional foul on Agali and the versatile Emmanuel Osei Kuffour, the Black Stars most dangerous player, was forced to play in goal.

Ghana's coach Fred Osam-Dudu and his captain of the day Emmanuel Osei Kuffour congratulated Nigeria on their qualification - but had their reservations about the officiating by the Tunisian referee Guirat Hichem.

"Nigeria were the better team on the day. We did not come here to play soft and made sure Nigeria had to work hard to get their victory," said Osam-Dudu.

Kuffour added: "I congratulate Nigeria on their victory. I believe with hard work they will do Africa proud at the World Cup.

In Lagos, meanwhile, fans took to the streets and chanted victory songs over Nigeria's qualification.Soccer-loving youths took to the streets in the Obalende area of the city immediately after the match.

Austin Okocha: Nigeria's midfield motivator.

(L-R) Real Madrid's new soccer star Zidane, Rivera, Flavio Conceicao and Alberto Celades run during the first training session of Real Madrid's training camp in Nyon, to prepare for the upcoming season.

Barca bow to Rivaldo

Brazilian star Rivaldo confirmed last week Thursday that he had reached agreement with Spanish outfit Barcelona following a wage dispute in which the striker had threatened to walk out on the club.

The 29-year-old Rivaldo had written on his internet site.

Earlier in the week that unless his demands were met he would assume he was no longer a part of the club and that he was up for sale.

Hours after the ultimatum by the 1999 FIFA World Player of the Year, club president Joan Gaspart had assured the player he would get what he wanted.

Club director Anton Parera described the situation regarding the 1999 World player of the year as a little misunderstanding.

And Rivaldo confirmed on his website late Thursday that the problem had been solved after club bosses met his agent Carlos Lage.

"Barcelona president Joan Gaspart has sorted out this situation," said Rivaldo, who spoke the Gaspart by telephone.

A source at the club said the Brazilian's 800-million-peseta (4.2-million-dollar) annual salary would now be raised to 1.2 billion pesetas (6.3 million dollars).

'MAN UTD RESTAURANT' IN TROUBLE

A newly-opened Hong Kong restaurant, which appropriates the name of English football giants Manchester United, may wind up being sued for its cheek, it was reported on last week.

The Man. United Restaurant and Bar, adorned with posters of star player David Beckham and offering dinners, the so-called "MU meat pie", opened in the busy entertainment district of Wan Chai last week Monday.

However, it has already attracted the watchful eye of the English Premier League champions, whose vast merchandising network, particularly in Asia, has helped to make them the world's wealthiest club.

Marketing bosses at the club were not amused and were considering legal action against the restaurant, the South China Morning Post reported.

"It's definitely not an official restaurant. We will certainly check it out," Van Ge Kourentis, head of the Manchester United marketing department, told the Post.

"We have marketing people in that part of the world. They will go and look at it, and we will make a decision on whether to take action."

The club already runs its own theme restaurants in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok and plans one for Hong Kong, another Manchester United official told the paper.

The restaurant's boss, Patrick Pang Yung, cheerfully admitted his outlet was unofficial and had been named simply to cash in on the club's popularity.

"Everyone is talking about soccer or soccer betting these days, and Manchester United is such a big name. So we decided to use the name to attract customers," he told the Post.

"Actually, we don't have that much to do with football. It's a restaurant, and we just want to have a gimmick to attract people," Pang added.

CARLOS PICKS MADRID AS THE BEST CLUB EVER

Brazilian defender Roberto Carlos has announced in his interview to Real Madrid's official website that though he is a bit tired he has come to Real Madrid's training camp, Nyon with lot of strength.

He has spent some days with the national team, and then he had 20 days of vacation, which is quite usual for him.

"People are extremely fond of this Real Madrid. The Real Madrid organization and the new players such as Figo and Zidane lead people to follow us with a lot of interest.

We've won two European Cups and one Liga title in the last four years, so we are the best club of the century at this moment and people are hopeful about this. Every year they love us more and more.

"The team is made out of very high quality players and the only thing I know is that it'll be really hard for all opponents which we are going to play against, even harder than last year.

They want to beat us more and more as we add titles. I feel privileged for being in this team because the rest of the squads play against us as if we were a national team. This is good for us, but it makes our work more difficult. We are the ones to blame for this situation because we've played very well for the club".

"Real Madrid supporters know that with Zidane the team has to play better and keep on guard, but it's no problem if one match is not played so well.

Opponents put a lot of pressure on us when they play home and they don't let us play, which makes everything more difficult for us. If you want to see good football you'd better go to Bernabeu. We know that our supporters are demanding, but we understand their demands".

On Zidane, Carlos said: "Playing in Italy or with the French national team is not the same as Real Madrid. He was the leader in his national team and in Juventus when Del Piero wasn't playing. They all would give him passes and the games was his. In Spain we play differently. Real Madrid is forced to quick balls due to the pressure from opponents, and he's a player that leads the ball very well and easily gets to the opponent goal area. He's got to get used to our style. I wish him the best of luck and we will help him to bring out all the good things inside him.

Zidane linked to drug rumour

Italian daily *"Corriere dello sport"*, has published evidence that one witness in a doping inquiry in a Bologna court for the use of banned substances in cycling, said that Real Madrid and French soccer star, Zinedine Zidane was one of the soccer players he saw few times in the surgery of doctor Michele Ferrari, who is being accused of doping.

However, Zidane himself hasn't confirmed or denied anything.

One thing is clear: the fact he has been seen in the surgery, doesn't mean he has utilized banned medicins. Presently there is one willing to interpret the interview he made a long ago, when he spoke about the necessity to take food integrators in order to manage to play 70-80 matches per year.

So, one question is obvious: why did Zidane visit doctor Ferrari, knowing the latter was under accusation?

As we said this is only a rumor, but in case the news are confirmed, surely there will be a big chaos.

Real Madrid's new soccer star Zinedine Zidane juggles with two ball during a training session in Real Madrid's training camp for the upcoming season in Nyon, Switzerland.

I NEARLY QUIT, RONALDO REVEALS

Brazilian superstar Ronaldo accepted the rumor he had thought of quitting the game after being dogged by injuries over the last two years.

"I have thought about throwing in the towel many times, that I didn't want to return. But being away from the game would be very hard.

"I also know that when I stop playing, in 10 or 15 years, it will also be very tough," said the Inter Milan striker, being due to return to action after his knee injury nightmare in August.

The 25-year-old missed the last season because of his injuries and played eight games for Inter in the previous campaign. He hasn't represented his country since October 1999.

Ronaldo, who has undergone surgery twice in the last eighteen months, is already looking ahead to his time outside the game.

"When I stop, I want to be a father. For the past week, my son Ronald has called me each day on the telephone and it was very moving," said Ronaldo who is battling to be fit for Brazil's World Cup qualifier against Paraguay on August 15.

He also believes that Inter are on course for a season where they will be title contenders.

"There will be something different this year. I don't know whether we will manage to win the Italian title, but I am convinced that we will have a good season," said the Brazilian.

Ronaldo

WORLD

Italy ... Italy ...

RUSSO WRITES

By Joe Russo

If you are judging by the dollar amount, then the top seven transfers of the European summer have all featured an Italian team.

Firstly there was of course Zinedine Zidane's A$120 million dollar move from Juventus to Real Madrid. The Frenchman's departure gave the Turin giants a lot of money, which they quickly went about spending.

They bought Parma and Italy's goalkeeper, Gianluigi Buffon, in an A$89 million move. Buffon, who recently spent a little while in Australia on holidays, is an excellent goalkeeper but whether the astronomical amount can be justified remains to be seen. It was even more incredible to think that the summer's second biggest transfer involved a goalkeeper.

Juventus were also involved in the sixth and seventh largest transfers of the summer. In order they were the purchases of Czech midfielder, Pavel Nedved, from Lazio and French defender, Lillian Thuram, also from Parma.

The three new purchases of Buffon, Nedved and Thuram should really strengthen the Juventus side, now under the coaching of Marcello Lippi again, for the coming season.

Lazio were also active in the market and besides selling Nedved, they also sold another midfielder Juan Veron to Man Utd in the third biggest transfer of the summer.

With the monies from those sales they purchased from Valencia Spanish midfielder, Gaizka Mendieta, in the summer's fifth biggest transfer.

And, finally, the summer's fourth biggest transfer was that of Portuguese midfield general, Manuel Rui Costa, from debt-stricken Fiorentina to AC Milan. Costa was active for the Milan giants scoring their first goal in the pre-season tournament known as the Amsterdam Cup against local favourites Ajax.

❑◆❑◆❑◆

The big news for Inter is that Ronaldo is back and he has already played in friendly games for the club. The Brazilian superstar hasn't laced a boot since April last year when, in an Italian Cup final against Lazio, he got injured.

Even then Ronaldo was on the comeback trail.

Many would argue that Ronaldo hasn't really been himself for the last three years - since the World Cup in France. However, Inter will be hoping that he can find his old form and finally share in a dream striking combination with Christian Vieri.

Vieri, who came within a whisker of signing for Juventus, and Ronaldo have never really had an opportunity to play together. Inter two years ago purchased Vieri to partner Ronaldo but a series of injuries to both players has not seen this dream eventuate.

Perhaps for Inter, a club that hasn't won a league title since 1989, this may be the year.

❑◆❑◆❑◆

Fabrizio Ravanelli, the former Italian striker, has recently signed for Derby County. At 32 years of age it could well be his last move before retirement.

Ravanelli shot to stardom in the mid 90's at Juventus and earned himself a regular place in the national team. However, five years ago he left the Serie A and his career has gone downhill since.

The national team was just a memory and the Serie A was one too. He left Juventus to join Middlesbrough but he lasted there just a year. The club was relegated and he went to France.

A couple of good years at Marseille saw him recalled two years ago to the Serie A and Lazio.

Ravanelli, however, got limited opportunities at the Rome giants and he spent most of his time on the bench. In fact he was hardly ever even used a sub.

So, with two years still left on his contract at Lazio, he has obviously decided that things wouldn't change there this year. Derby County, a mediocre club in the Premier League, represents perhaps his last chance to start regularly and return to big-time football.

Meanwhile, Sam Dalla Bona, the Italian midfielder who plays for Chelsea looks set to join AC Milan.

Now that would be a big move for the young Italian who wants to return home.

He joined Chelsea in 1998 from Atalanta and was recently linked with a move to newly promoted Venezia. He rejected that move and now with his place in the starting lineup at Stamford Bridge looking grim, he looks set to join AC Milan.

The only problem is that at AC Milan he will probably have to spend more time on the bench than he would have to at Chelsea!

AC Milan's new striker Filippo Inzaghi (right) hugs newly-signed striker Rui Costa after his first goal against Ajax at the Amsterdam Tournament, last week.

Hope rises for Davids

The attorney of Juventus, Turin Vittorio Chiuzano expresses a hope on the issue that the term of Edgar Davids disqualification won't be long-term, as it was expected beforehand. He stated:

"According to the previous practice, in most cases players' interdictions are usually cut to minimum. I believe the court will make a favor for Davids, though nothing is confirmed yet."

Chiuzano also told his opinion on player's dope-test positive result. He commented that Davids had used homeopathic remedies for a period of time in order to improve his eyesight, and this can obviously be a reason for revealing dope.

"Very soon the results of his analysis will be known and we'll finally get a chance to learn the actual truth", declared attorney.

INTER DEBUT THRILLS KALLON

New look Inter Milan scored an amazing 17 goals in a friendly match last week against Bormiese.

Inter's newcomer, Mohammed Kallon scored five times. After the match in Bormio he has talked to Inter's president Massimo Moratti.

"Moratti has come to me and has congratulated and welcomed me ... I've been waiting this opportunity for a while.

I think I've been heaping up experience in many different Italian clubs, changing frequently because I don't score that much. I've always scored when I've got the chance to do it. I believe I will do my best with Inter," told Kallon Inter's official website.

Ulliveri predicts glory days at Parma

Italian side Parma's head coach Renzo Ulivieri is firm that his team's next season Serie A campaign will be a success.

According to Italian press, Parma is only the sixth club of the championship following well-known Italian giants Roma, Juventus, Milan, Lazio and Inter.

But veteran coach expressed his confidence of success.

"According to the newspaper reports, Parma would be a step down compared to other teams," he told club's official website.

"Always the same story: they suppose we should not win only because we are calm, there is no super pressure on us.

Nevertheless, all these theories are not true to me. Our brilliant history clearly proves it. In the past ten years, Parma won more titles than any other club, and this year we have great expectations as well."

"In spite of many newcomers, our team will surprise everybody.

We're working hard making progress as days go by," Ulivieri continued.

Ulivieri has also spoken about the Parma leaders, Cannavaro and Nakata.

"I never doubted Cannavaro would stay with us. He made a choice at the beginning of the season and he will stick to it up to the end."

"Hidetoshi is progressing day after day. Although he wasn't in a perfect shape in the last friendly match, I see no problem. He's been working hard and I'm sure he'll help us a great deal."

LAZIO CAN'T LURE CANNAVARO

Lazio president Sergio Cragnotti admitted that he has failed to sign defender Fabio Cannavaro from Parma.

The latter demanded about 23 million dollars plus Paolo Negro for the Italian international. According to Cannavaro, he was not at all surprised." I knew I would never be sold," he said.

The representatives of Lazio and Parma met on earlier last week, but the meeting had no positive results as two sides never came to an agreement.

Cragnotti had offered striker Simone Inzaghi and midfielder Roberto Baronio plus cash for Cannavaro but Parma owner, Tanzim family didn't compromise. In his turn, Cragnotti was not prepared to lose Negro and the matter was declared to be over.

ENGLAND ... ENGLAND ... ENGLAND

Shola Ameobi (left) of Newcastle Utd challenges Vidar Riseth of German club 1860 Munich during their UEFA Intertoto Cup game in Munich's Olympic Stadium. Newcastle won the match 3-2.

WHY I LEFT ENGLAND, LEBOEUF

France defender Frank Leboeuf has said that it was the right time to leave English Premiership side Chelsea and return to France.

The 1998 World Cup and Euro 2000 winner earlier this week signed for home town club Marseille a $1.8m move.

Leboeuf said the last season arrival of new coach Claudio Ranieri convinced him to leave the London club.

"There is nothing worse than an entertainer who outstays his welcome and I was not the only one at Chelsea who knew that it was time to move on," Leboeuf told "The Times".

"At the end of last season I had a cup of tea with Dennis Wise and Gustavo Poyet and the more we reminisced about the many successes we had enjoyed, the more we realised that a new era had come in."

The controversial Leboeuf, is an object for ridicule in England for his comments that the game here was too violent and he could never have played for another English club.

His biggest regret was that his relationship with former Chelsea coach Gianluca Vialli had soured.

"I am sure he regrets how he allowed his friendship with players such as myself, GianFranco Zola and Roberto Di Matteo to fall apart once he became so intense as a coach," he said.

Leboeuf added that despite his fondness for London he was "thrilled to be going back to the city where I was born.

LEEDS RUBBISH O'LEARY'S MAN UTD LINK

Leeds chairman Peter Ridsdale has defiantly stated David O'Leary is committed to the Elland Road cause — dismissing speculation linking the Irishman with a move to Manchester United.

Ridsdale initially appeared to suggest O'Leary would be free to move to Old Trafford should United come calling once Sir Alex Ferguson relinquishes the reins next summer.

But Ridsdale has now moved to clear up any confusion, insisting the 43-year-old Irishman is not going anywhere because of his determination to finish a job he started almost three years ago.

Despite the millions of pounds O'Leary has spent in the transfer market since he took charge, the trophy cabinet remains bare and the expectations are growing.

But Ridsdale is convinced — as he has been since appointing O'Leary in October 1998 — he has the right man for the job and the dream of silverware is close to becoming a reality.

Ridsdale's stance was reaffirmed last season when O'Leary signed a new and improved six-year, $11m deal, making him one of the highest paid managers in the Premier League.

ERIKSSON SUES BRITISH MAG

England football coach Sven Goran Eriksson is suing Hello! magazine for alleged breach of privacy after it published pictures of his London home.

The 19 June edition of the celebrity publication included a feature on the Swedish manager's new £3m house, including a picture of him relaxing in an armchair in his living room.

Solicitors Osborne Clarke, acting on his behalf, have written to Hello! claiming costs and damages.

Hello! has denied a breach of privacy, and insists the photographs were obtained legitimately, and within the bounds of the Press Complaints Commission code of conduct.

The magazine's editor-in-chief, Phil Hall, defended the article, entitled: "Sven-Goran Eriksson: The international soccer manager spends £3m on a very English home".

He said: "We follow the PCC code of conduct very carefully and we have not breached it in this case.

ABSW FORECASTS ... ABSW FORECASTS ... ABSW FORECASTS ...

ASTON VILLA
Position in 2000/01: 8th
Transfers: In- Olof Mellberg (Racing Santander), Peter Schmeichel (Sporting Lisbon), Mustapha Hadji (Coventry City), Hassan Kachoul (Southampton), Giovanni Sperenza (Eintracht Frankfurt).

Out- David James (West Ham), Gareth Southgate (Middlesborough), Julian Joachim (Coventry City).

Aston Villa were disappointing last season and will certainly be aiming for Europe this time around. Villa drew more games than any other team that campaign and often lacked the ability to kill off teams with their inconsistent firepower up front.

John Gregory has drafted into the squad some much needed attacking flair in Morrocan duo Mustapha Hadji and Hassan Kachoul, while we are yet too see the best of Colombian attacker Juan Pablo Angel.

It will be interesting to see if Swedish international Olof Mellberg will be able to fill the void left by departing defender Gareth Southgate, and also look out for the 'Great Dane' between the sticks, who makes a surprising return to the Premier League.

Players to watch: Peter Schmeichel, Juan Pablo Angel and Paul Merson.

BLACKBURN ROVERS
Position in 2000/01: 2nd in Division 1.
Transfers: In- Kerimoglou Tugay (Rangers), Alan Mahon (Sporting Lisbon), Corrado Grabbi (Ternana), Gordon Greer (Clyde).

Out- Gary Hamilton (Out of contract), Steve Hawe (Out of contract), MichaelBingham (Mansfield Town), Lee Hardy (Oldhan Athletic).

The second promoted team from last season boasts a wealth of players with Premier League experience including the likes of Jason MacAteer, Stig Bjornebye, Mark Hughes, Keith Gillespe and Henning Berg. The Rovers also welcome Serie B's top scorer last season, Corrado Grabbi and quality Turkish midfielder Tugay.

Blackburn will be aiming for survival this year but don't be surprised if Souness's chargers pull off a few upsets along the way remembering the amazing feats of Ipswich Town last season.

Players to watch: Kerimoglou Tugay, Corrado Grabbi and Damien Duff.

BOLTON WANDERERS
Position in 2000/01: 3rd in Division 1.
Transfers: In- Akinori Nishizawa (Cerezo Osaka), Henrik Pederson (Silkeborg), Djibril Diawara (Torino), Nicky Southall (Gillingham).

Out- Nicky Summerbee (Out of contract), Juergen Sommer (Out of contract), Robbie Elliot (Newcastle), John O'Kane (Blackpool).

On paper the Bolton Wanderers look most likely to struggle out of the newly promoted teams. While bringing in Japanese star Nishizawa, a prolific striker from the J-League, and attacker Diawara from Torino, I think the Wanderers will find the going too tough this year. Their aging squad won't welcome the sale of reliable left back Robbie Elliot to Newcastle.

Players to watch: Akinori Nishizawa.

CHARLTON ATHLETIC
Position in 2000/01: 9th
Transfers: In- Jason Euell (Wimbledon), Shaun Bartlett (FC Zurich).

Out- Karim Bagheri (Out of contract), Andy Hunt (retired).

The Addicks surprised many last year by finishing in a respectable mid-table position. Along the way they beat the likes of Chelsea (twice) and Arsenal proving they could match it with best on their day.

Charlton have made one smart signing in Jason Euell who alongside Shaun Bartlett could prove a handful for most defences.

Danish international Claus Jensen was a revelation last season and a lot will be asked from him if the Addicks are to perform as well this time around.

Players to watch: Claus Jensen, Jason Euell.

CHELSEA
Position in 2000/01: 6th
Transfers: In- Emmanuel Petit (Barcelona), Frank Lampard (West Ham), William Gallas (Marseille).

Out- Mark Nicholls (Out of contract), Bernard Lambourde (Bastia), Dennis Wise (Leicester City), Gustavo Poyet (Tottenham Hotspur).

Chelsea have spent big yet again this summer and it will be interesting to see how Petit and Lampard replace the inspirational Dennis Wise, and brilliant Gus Poyet.

There is no doubting the quality of the new signings and both players should adapt quickly as they are well accustomed to the English game.

Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink in my opinion is one of the top three strikers in England and Marcel Desailly lets very little get through.

What will be the real litmus test for Chelsea is how they travel. The Blues have a capable squad but need to win games away from home (unlike last season) if they are to match it with the top four.

Players to watch: Marcel Desailly, Emmanuel Petit, Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink.

Gustavo Poyet (left) with new coach, Glenn Hoddle at Tottenham Hotspurs.

DERBY COUNTY
Position in 2000/01: 17th
Transfers: Out- Rory Delap (Southampton), Gerard Doherty (Out of contract).

Derby escaped relegation with a comfortably gap at the end of last season but still had to fight for many nervous weeks beforehand. Jim Smith's chargers have a lot of character but posses one major weakness, a lack of firepower up front.

Smith is aiming to lure veteran Italian striker Fabrizio Ravanelli and his goals would be crucial for the Rams to survive.

Players to watch: Seth Johnson, Branko Strupar.

EVERTON
Position in 2000/01: 16th
Transfers: In- Tomasz Radzinski (Anderlecht), Alan Stubbs (Celtic).

Out- Stephen Hughes (Watford), Francis Jeffers (Arsenal), Richard Gough (Out of contract).

The Blue half of Merseyside will have to wait a few more seasons before Everton emerge as a force in the Premier League. Last season was a struggle and Walter Smith has only been able to lure Canadian striker Tomasz Radzinski and defender Alan Stubbs.

Radzinski was the top scorer in Belgium last season (23 goals) and should be a capable replacement for Francis Jeffers. Everton will look to cement a mid-table position this year.

Players to watch: Tomasz Radzinski, Niclas Alexandersson, Duncan Ferguson.

FULHAM
Position in 2000/01: 1st in Division 1.
Transfers: In- Abdeslam Ouaddou (Nancy), Luis Boa Morte (Southampton).

Out- Paul Peschisolido (Sheffield United), Wayne Collins (Out of contract), Terry Phelan (Out of contract).

Fulham ran away with the first division title last season and proved their Premiership worth with a credible 2-1 loss to Manchester United in the FA Cup. Jean Tigana's team will aim to survive this year but have the resources to do better, and can bank on experienced hands like Chris Coleman, Alain Goma, Bjarne Goldbaek and Lee Clark to steer the ship.

Luis Boa Morte never set the world on fire at Southampton but is a useful partner for Louis Saha in attack.

Players to watch: Chris Coleman, Louis Saha, Alain Goma.

IPSWICH TOWN
Position in 2000/01: 5th
Transfers: In- Tommy Miller (Hartlepool United), Andy Marshall (Norwich City), Pablo Counago (Celta Vigo).

Out- Richard Wright (Arsenal) Sean Friars (Out of contract).

The 'Tractor Boys' had a dream return to the Premier League last season and at one stage were threatening for a Champions League position.

I don't see any reason why this remarkable feat can't be repeated but Town will have to find a capable partner for the over-relied upon Marcus Stewart, who scored more goals than anyone else in the Premier League.

New striker Pablo Counago is a Spanish U-21 international with a lot of promise. The loss of England 'keeper Richard Wright will be hard to replace but Burley is expected to announce the signing of a Spanish international before the season starts.

Players to watch: Martijn Reuser, Marcus Stewart, Matt Holland.

(Concluding Part Next Week)

WORLD

FIFA World Rankings

(Valid until August 22)

1	France	810	69	Bolivia	516	137	Grenada	298
2	Brazil	795	70	Senegal	509	138	Yemen	295
3	Argentina	764	71	Burkina Faso	506	139	Rwanda	286
4	Italy	735	72=	Algeria	505	140	Myanmar	283
5	Germany	726	72=	Kuwait	505	141	Tajikistan	271
6	Spain	715	74	Iraq	504	142	Surinam	268
7	Portugal	712	75	Bosnia-Herz	501	143	Luxemburg	263
8	Paraguay	711	76	Cyprus	500	144	Ethiopia	262
9	Czech Republic	709	77	Macedonia FYR	498	145	Andorra	255
10	Netherlands	695	78	Canada	496	146	Palestine	253
11	Romania	689	79	Georgia	495	147	Bangladesh	251
12	Yugoslavia	688	80	Estonia	493	148	Maldives	248
13	Mexico	687	81	Congo DR	488	149=	Liechtenstein	246
14=	Colombia	682	82	Cuba	483	149=	Sri Lanka	246
14=	England	682	83	Haiti	482	151	Korea DPR	245
16	United States	672	84	Belarus	480	152	Tanzania	239
17	Denmark	670	85=	Albania	475	153	Antigua & Barbuda	235
18	Croatia	668	85=	New Zealand	475	154	Botswana	230
19	Sweden	659	87	El Salvador	473	155	Benin	225
20	Russia	658	88	Indonesia	470	156	Nepal	220
21	Norway	654	89	Gabon	469	157	Dominica	216
22	Tunisia	647	89	Qatar	469	158	Gambia	215
23	Ireland Republic	640	91	Oman	467	159	San Marino	213
24	Poland	638	92	Congo	460	160	Bermuda	209
25	South Africa	633	93	Syria	456	161	Cayman Islands	207
26	Belgium	631	94	Lithuania	455	162=	Cape Verde Is.	206
27	Trinidad & Tobago	622	95	Latvia	453	162=	Dominican Rep.	206
28=	Morocco	621	96	Guinea	451	164	British Virgin Is.	202
28=	Saudi Arabia	621	97=	Armenia	449	165	Kyrgyzstan	196
30	Uruguay	620	97=	Namibia	449	166	Laos	194
31	Chile	619	99	Lebanon	440	167=	Belize	187
32	Japan	614	100=	Jordan	437	167=	Eritrea	187
33	Costa Rica	610	100=	Vietnam SR	437	169=	Chinese Taipei	182
34	Cameroon	609	102	Kenya	423	169=	Vanuatu	182
35=	Slovakia	608	103	Moldova	422	171	Cambodia	178
35=	Turkey	608	104	Kazakhstan	421	172	Mauritania	172
37	Scotland	606	105	Wales	416	173	Chad	165
38	Egypt	602	106	Northern Ireland	413	174	Samoa	158
39=	Korea Republic	599	107	Barbados	412	175	Guyana	154
39=	Nigeria	599	108	Singapore	410	176	Cook Islands	152
39=	Slovenia	599	109	Malaysia	404	177	Tonga	151
42	Cote d' Ivoire	594	110	Mali	399	178	Philippines	143
43	Austria	592	111	Uganda	390	179	Netherlands Ant.	124
44	Israel	586	112	Panama	388	180	C. African Rep.	121
45	Jamaica	584	113	Azerbaijan	383	181=	Guinea-Bissau	115
46	**AUSTRALIA**	583	114	Libya	380	181=	Macao	115
47	Ukraine	579	115=	Turkmenistan	377	183	Bahamas	111
48	Honduras	578	115=	Venezuela	377	184	Sao Tome e Principe	110
49	Bulgaria	577	117	India	376	185	Pakistan	106
50	Ecuador	571	118	Bahrain	363	186	Aruba	101
51	Iran	566	119	Faroe Islands	359	187	Niger	95
52	Iceland	565	120	Malawi	357	188	Mongolia	94
53	Peru	560	121	Mozambique	353	189	Nicaragua	89
54	Hungary	559	122	Sudan	351	190	Brunei Darussalam	86
55	Ghana	557	123	Fiji	349	190	Equatorial Guinea	86
56	Angola	555	124	Madagascar	348	192	Seychelles	79
57	Greece	552	125	Mauritius	341	193	Djibouti	76
58	Guatemala	548	126	Tahiti	336	194	Anguilla	65
59	Finland	545	127	Lesotho	329	195	Papua New Guinea	61
59	Zambia	545	128	St Lucia	327	196	Somalia	56
61	Thailand	541	129	St Kitts & Nevis	324	197	Puerto Rico	55
62	Switzerland	539	130=	St Vincent/Gre	323	198	US Virgin Islands	48
63=	China PR	527	130=	Swaziland	323	199	Guam	27
63=	Uzbekistan	527	132	Sierra Leone	314	200	Turks and Caicos Is.	21
65	Togo	520	133	Malta	312	201	American Samoa	16
66	Liberia	519	134	Hong Kong	310	202	Bhutan	14
67=	UAE	518	135	Solomon Islands	309	203	Montserrat	11
67=	Zimbabwe	518	136	Burundi	305			

***Note:** Teams inactive since 1991 and teams which have not played yet do not appear in the table.*

Transfer News ... Transfer News ...

Parma poach Djetou from Monaco

French international defender Martin Djetou has been signed by Italian giants Parma from French club Monaco for a fee believed to be around nine million dollars.

The 26-year-old player, who was a member of the 1997 and 2000 league titlewinning sides and narrowly missed out on the final 22 for the 1998 World Cup squad, signed a five-year contract.

"Djetou has signed his contract and trained with his new team-mates on Monday," Parma's public relations director Giorgio Bottaro said.

Djetou, whose central defensive partner Philippe Christanval left for Spanish giants Barcelona last month, joins compatriots Sebastien Frey, Alain Boghossian, Johan Micoud and Sabri Lamouchi, who was also a member of the Monaco titlewinning side in 2000.

Lebouef leaves Chelsea for Marseille

Chelsea's French World Cup winning central defender Frank Leboeuf confirmed last week he had signed a two-year contract with French giants Marseille for around $1.8 million.

The 33-year-old player, who has been at Chelsea for five years and had one year left on his contract, revealed that he had only been approached by Marseille's flamboyant general manager Bernard Tapie over the weekend and it had taken just 20 minutes to convince him to move to the 1993 European Cup winners.

Leboeuf, who only played in the 1998 World Cup final because first choice Laurent Blanc was suspended after being sent-off in the semi-final, has yet to pass a medical and agree personal terms although he said he expected to play against Montpellier in the season opener last Saturday.

"Bernard Tapie rang me just after I got back from a training camp in Italy with Chelsea," he said. "His message was very clear 'we want you'."

"We talked for about 20 minutes and quickly reached an agreement on the transfer," he added.

Leboeuf, who saw a deal to move to another French side Monaco collapse at the beginning of the year, said his ambition was to restore Marseille to the dominance they enjoyed when Tapie was the president of the club in the late 80's and early 90's.

"I really want to return Marseille to the position they merit ... first place," he said.

"I know it will be difficult as they have rebuilt virtually the whole side but the challenge excites me and in a season that climaxes with the World Cup I don't think I've made a bad choice," he added.

Chelsea managing director Colin Hutchinson also confirmed the deal was close to completion for the robust defender, who was a member of the Euro 2000 title winning squad but had a nightmare in the recent Confederations Cup when as captain he was sent-off against Australia.

"We have agreed a deal with Marseille with regard to Frank Leboeuf," he said.

Frank is now on his way to France to hold talks with the club. It has been fairly well-documented that, back in January, he was keen to go to Monaco.

"That deal fell through but now Frank has another opportunity to finish his career in his homeland. Marseille is close to the area where his parents live."

Frank Leboeuf: "I want to return Marseille to ... the first place."

SALAS STAYS PUT AT LAZIO

Lazio's striker Marcelo Salas has ruled out a move to Spanish side Valencia and decided to stay in Rome for family reasons.

Last week Valencia had agreed to swap Argentinean winger Kily Gonzalez plus a cash adjustment to the Italians.

But according the Spanish national news agency Efe, the player's agent Fernando Hidalgo said that Salas had decided not to move despite a preliminary agreement between the two clubs.

Valencia were willing to pay Lazio $555,000 as well as release Gonzalez in order to bring Salas to the Mestalla as a replacement for influential midfielder, Gaizka Mendieta who joined Lazio for a whopping $41million a fortnight ago.

It will not be the first time Salas will be rejecting a move out of Lazio.The big striker had reacted furiously in the summer of 2000, when he felt Lazio were trying to sell him off in order to avoid paying his huge wages as well as winning bonuses.

The Chilean star still has two years to run on his contract, which guarantees him $6million in wages, despite the fact that he is no longer a regular in the starting line-up of the Rome-based side.

SPURS PULL PLUG ON CHAMOT

Tottenham's manager Glenn Hoddle has rejected claims that the club is on the verge of signing AC Milan's Argentine defender Jose Antonio Chamot.

The news on Chamot's arrival for a medical examination appeared on the club's official website, along with information that he had agreed personal terms for a two-year contract after being granted a free transfer by Milan.

But former England coach Hoddle rejected the suggestion that the move of 32-year-old Chamot is a done deal.

"Chamot has come over for talks, but I think some people are getting too far ahead of themselves," Hoddle admitted:

He has also rejected claims that the player hadn't undergone a medical.

"He will probably go back to Italy now and then he will have some more talks in a week or two, but he's just one of five or six possibilities we are keeping an eye on.

"We are in touch with a couple of the others as well." Hoddle added.

WORLD

Transfer News ...

Bayern convince Lizarazu to stay

Bayern Munich manager Uli Hoeness said last week that French international defender Bixente Lizarazu had agreed to stay with the club until his contract expires in 2003, despite overtures from Manchester United.

Lizarazu said a fortnight ago that United had made him an attractive three-year offer and that he and Bayern would be discussing his future. Bayern president Franz Beckenbauer had earlier indicated that the World Cup winner was in line for a big pay rise.

The respected Frenchman, who helped Bayern to a historic European Champions League triumph in May, has severally voiced his desire to leave the Bavarian giants.

He was initially believed to have sought a move due to persistent death threats to him by Spanish Basque separatists, who have branded him a traitor.

Lizarazu is part-Basque, though one of his parents is French.

However, after successfully helping Bayern to the Champions League title in May, the speedy fullback expressed interest in joining Manchester United, in what many observers believe was a deep discontent with his remunerations at Bayern.

It is no secret that Manchester United supremo, Sir Alex Fergusson has long admired the petite Frenchman and was eagerly interested in luring him away from Bayern.

Bixente Lizarazu: Remaining at Bayern Munich.

JUGOVIC JOINS MONACO

Monaco manager Didier Deschamps has signed former Juventus team-mate veteran Yugoslav international midfielder Vladimir Jugovic on loan for one year from Serie A side Inter Milan last week.

The 32-year-old player, capped 39 times and a member of the 1998 World Cup squad, played with Deschamps for two years at Juventus from 1995-97 and won 1996 European Cup.

The veteran midfielder has seen himself frozen out of Juventus first team in the last season with the commanding presence of Dutchman Edgar Davids.

Even with Davids current suspension for illegal drug use, there is still little hope that Jugovic will be restored to the first team as Czech star Pavel Nedved's summer move to the Turin-based side has put paid to that.

Deschamps, who formed an impregnable midfield partnership with Jugoivic during his stay at Juventus is hoping the experienced international will help fill the gap created by the departure of Monaco's twin defence strongmen, Martin Djetou and Philipe Christanval.

Christanval left for Spanish giants, Barcelona last month, while Djetou joined Italian Serie A side, Parma last week.

Spurs target Boban, sell-off Young

Zvonimir Boban: Courted by Spurs.

AC Milan's midfielder Zvonimir Boban is still not sure where he will play next season.

Asked about the possibly of transferring to Tottenham Hotspur, Boban said: "I really don't know about it. I am still on vacation and look forward to relax."

Speculation ahs been rife all through last week that Tottenham coach, Glenn Hoddle is keen to bring the experienced Croatian striker to White Hart Lane and has already opened discussions with AC Milan.

Meanwhile, England Under-21 international defender Luke Young has signed a four-year contract with English Premiership side Charlton Athletic from league rival's Tottenham, Charlton's management reported last week.

The 22-year-old Young becomes Charlton's third major singing of the summer following strikers Jason Euell and Shaun Bartlett.

Charlton chairman Richard Murray toldt he club's website: "We are also spending $12.9 million on The Valley's new north stand I feel that this latest transfer serves to underline the scale of our ambitions."

The deal is reported to be worth $4.3 million.

BENFICA SNAP-UP SIMAO

Barcelona's Portuguese striker Simao Sabrosa last week signed with Benfica of Portugal for two billion pesetas (10.6 million dollars), the Spanish club has said.

The Spanish club also have an option to purchase Benfica's 19-year-old Angolan striker Roberto Mantorras.

The 21-year-old Simao arrived at Barcelona in 1999 from Sporting Lisbon for 2.3 billion pesetas (12.2 million dollars) and his contract, which had a 10 billion pesetas (60 million dollars) buyout clause, was due to expire in 2007.

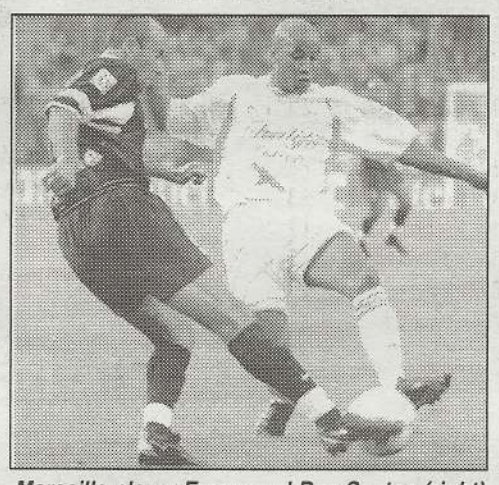
He was brought in as a replacement for another Poruuguese star, Luis Figo who joined Real Madrid in a then world record transfer, which was also highly-volatile as both giants Spanish clubs rarely exchange players.

Simao was very successfully on the right wing for Barcelona and was clearly seen as an ideal support for Brazilian midfield wizard and one-time World Best player, Rivaldo.

WORLD RESULTS ... WORLD RESULTS

FRENCH CHAMPIONNAT

NANTES START DEFENCE WITH DEFEAT



Marseille player Emmanuel Dos Santos (right) challenges Pascal Fugier of Montpellier during their French championship opening soccer match in Montpellier.

French champions Nantes had a poor start to his year's campaign going down 2-0 away to Bordeaux in the opening match of the French First Division season.

The home side were comfortable winners over the struggling Canaries with two first half goals from Portuguese striker Pauleta on 26 and the second from Paulo Miranda three minutes before the break.

The opening shot was set up by Sylvain Legwinski 40 metres out from the Canaries defence, with an unopposed Pauleta striking into the back of the net from the inside of his right foot past Nantes goalie Mickael Landreau.

The second goal also came from the left with Pauleta feeding Miranda, which allowed the Brazilian to score a well-placed header.

Paris Saint Germain drew a blank on the opening day of the French league season over the weekend with a goalless draw at the Parc des Princes against Lille, while Didier Deschamps saw his first match as Monaco coach end in a surprise 1-0 home loss to promoted Sochaux.

With Bordeaux having shown the route to goal by beating champions Nantes 2-0 on Friday, both PSG and Monaco, as well as last season's runners-up Lyon had a lot to live up to.

All three failed to do so, failing to score a single goal between them as Lyon, without the injured Sonny Anderson, slid to a 2-0 reverse at Lens.

Auxerre, welcoming wily coach Guy Roux back as coach after he took a break last season following 39 years in the post, scored the biggest win of the day, 5-0 at Rennes, with Djibril Cisse making an early claim for the top goalscorer's crown by scoring four.

Given their massively disappointing ninth place last season, PSG were on a mission to reward the 43,000 fans who turned up at the Parc des Princes expecting a massive improvement. They didn't get one.

Instead, PSG, shorn of the attacking services of Nicolas Anelka, missing with an injured toe, huffed and puffed their way through as new Brazilian signing Jose Aloisio fluffed an early header and then transfer-listed Laurent Robert had a goal ruled out moments before the break with a colleague caught offside.

Paris Saint Germain 0 Lille 0, Lens 2 Lyon 0, Montpellier 1 Marseille 1, Monaco 0 Sochaux 1, Rennes 0 Auxerre 5, Troyes 3 Guingamp 0, Lorient 1 Metz 0, Bastia 1 Sedan 1 Bordeaux 2 Nantes 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Auxerre	1	1	0	0	5	0	3
2. Troyes	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
3. Bordeaux	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
4. Lens	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
5. Lorient	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
6. Sochaux	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
7. Bastia	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
8. Marseille	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
9. Montpellier	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
10. Sedan	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
11. Lille	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
12. Paris SG	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
13. Metz	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
14. Monaco	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
15. Lyon	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
16. Nantes	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
17. Guingamp	1	0	0	1	0	3	0
18. Rennes	1	0	0	1	0	5	0

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

OPENING DAY SHOCKER FOR BAYERN

German and European champions Bayern Munich slid to a 1-0 defeat at promoted Borussia Moenchengladbach on the opening day of the Bundesliga season. A goal after 25 minutes from Arie van Lent sending the capacity 35,000 crowd into ecstasy.

Bayern, going for what would be an unprecedented fourth straight Bundesliga title, had the bulk of the possession but were having difficulty brushing off the summer cobwebs and were duly slated by their coach Ottmar Hitzfeld afterwards.

Gladbach, despite having their backs to the wall, held out in what used to be a classic fixture in the 1970s which the two clubs dominated with Bayern winning three consecutive European Cups and their rivals winning three straight league titles.

Franz Beckenbauer, who played for Bayern in many of the 1970s encounters, had said last Friday he may step down as club president at the end of the season so he can concentrate on the 2006 World Cup which Germany will host - if they are champions again.

Beckenbauer presciently had also warned his team that nine defeats last season "is simply too many" and had not expected to see them first up on the board quite so early.

Gladbach coach Hans Meyer saluted his side's efforts but warned many other stiff tests lay in wait.

"We really dug in in the first half and in the second we were lucky to stay alive on two or three occasions. But it was only the first game and take a few hits in the course of those to come."

Bayern counterpart Hitzfeld, who insists he will not be a contender in the race to succeed Manchester United coach Sir Alex Ferguson at Old Trafford, demanded an immediate improvement.

"We didn't get into the match at all well. Our defence dwelt on the ball and we didn't put Moenchengladbach under pressure enough.

We were missing that extra ten percent you need to beat a side which has just been promoted," Hitzfeld said.

Bayern have suffered worse fates on day one, however. In the 1974-75 season they opened up as defending champions and capsized 6-0 at Kickers Offenbach.

Borussia Dortmund, the 1997 European champions, could pose a strong challenge this time round and saw off Nuremberg 2-0 with a brace for 25-million-dollar Brazilian forward Marcio Amoroso in the first half before a 65,000 crowd at the Westfalenstadion.

Borussia Dortmund's Tomas Rosicky, (left) FC Nuremberg's Kai Michalke challenge for the ball during their match over the weekend.

1860 Munchen 0 Kaiserslautern 4, Stuttgart 0 Cologne 0, Energie 1 Hamburg 0 Freiburg 3 Werder 0, Borussia Dortmund 2 Nurnberg 0, Bayer Leverkusen 2 Wolfsburg 1, Borussia M'gladbach 1 Bayern Munich 0 St. Pauli 0 Hertha Berlin 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Kaiserslautern	1	1	0	0	4	0	3
2. SC Freiburg	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
3. Bor. Dortmund	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
4. B. Leverkusen	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
5. Energ. Cottbus	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
6. M' gladbach	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
7. Cologne	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
8. VfB Stuttgart	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
9. Hertha Berlin	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
10.Hansa Rostock	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11.Schalke 04	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12.Sankt Pauli	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
13.VfL Wolfsburg	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
14.Bayern Munich	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
15.SV Hamburg	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
16.FC Nuremberg	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
17.Werder Bremen	1	0	0	1	0	3	0
18.1860 Munich	1	0	0	1	0	4	0

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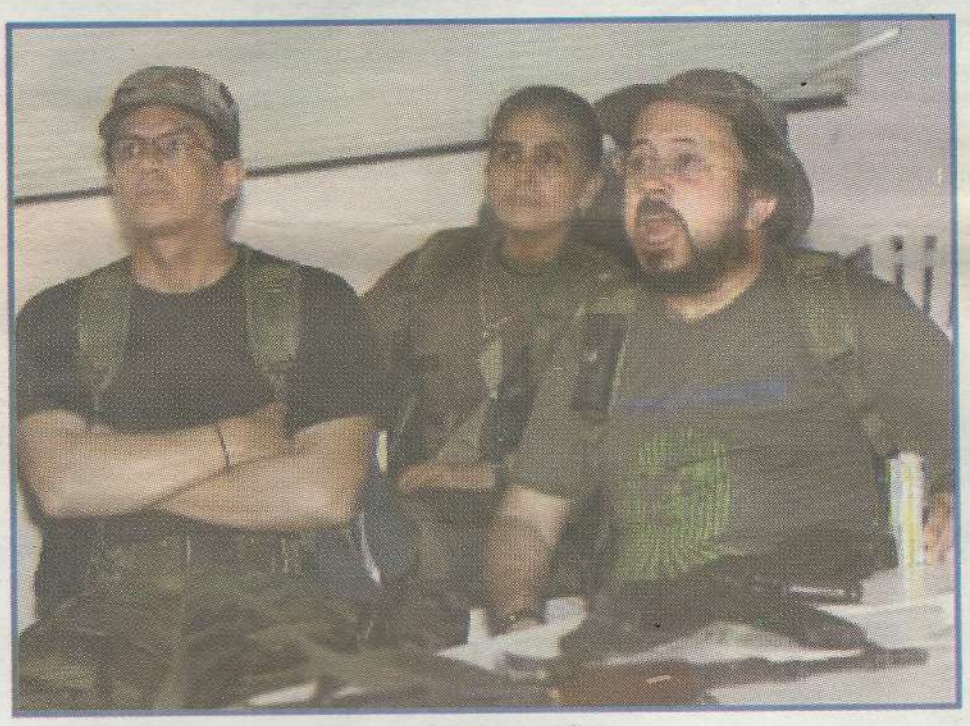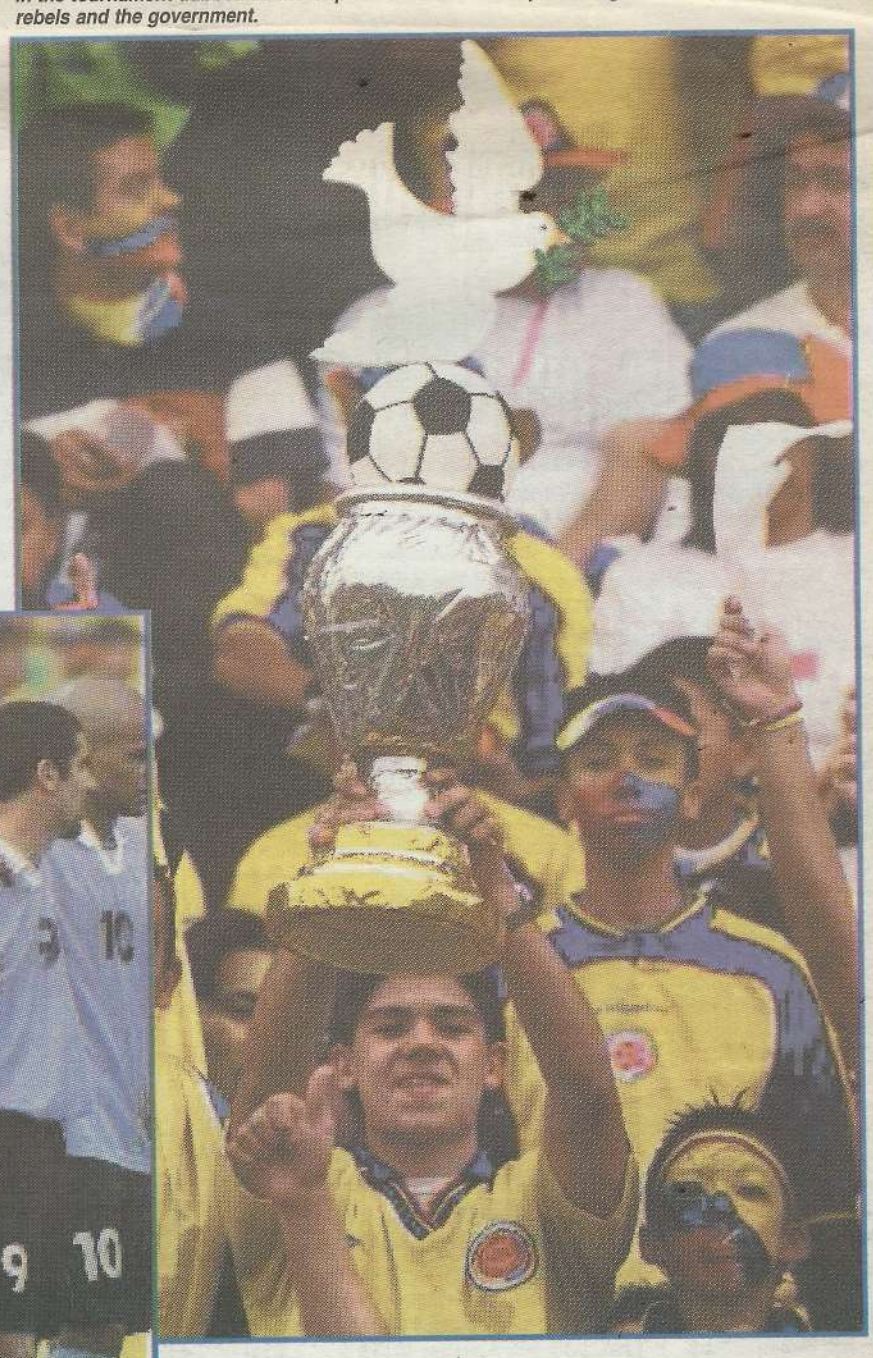
• (Clockwise from top left): Colombia's captain and defender, Ivan Cordoba (left) challenges Mexican striker, Jared Borghetti in the final.
• Argentine soccer star Diego Armando Maradona blows a kiss towards fans as he enters El Campin Stadium to watch the final game between Mexico and Colombia.
• A Colombian fan holds up a model of the Copa America championship trophy topped off with a dove as a symbol for peace before the final match in Bogota, Colombia.
• Uruguayan players stand dejected on the field after losing the game for third place to Honduras at the Copa America in Bogota, Colombia. Honduras won the game 5-4 on penalty kicks.
• Guerrillas of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia watch TV as their national soccer team play Mexico in the final match. Colombia beat Mexico to clinch the title for the first time, in the tournament dubbed as the Cup of Peace due to the peace negotiations between the rebels and the government.